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THE WORLD'S SEXIEST WOMEN

INTERVIEW
CHARLIE SHEEN

20 QUESTIONS
DAX SHEPARD

THE PLAYBOY WOMEN
GLOBAL
MAGNETIC
RARE

The Cover Girls

Mateja Gaspar, Sky Aisuru, Kasia Danyz, Kandra Van Der Bank
Katarina Sarkova, Irina Georgescu, Anastasija Budic, Lingita Lina Bopulu
Katherine Bautista, Clivia Treidl, Zimra Geurts

18 AND ABOVE

ISSN 2012-0281

CARS OF THE YEAR 2013 . MAN OF THE MONTH NATIONAL ARTIST FOR LITERATURE F. SIONIL JOSE . SLEEPLESS NIGHTS IN BORACAY

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Others say this is the new world. But after that failure called "the end of the world" in the last month of 2012, it is obvious that there is no such thing as that. It still feels and looks all the same to me. But either this is still the old world or the new one, this new year calls for a celebration as we gear up for PLAYBOY's 60th anniversary before the year ends! That probably is something much more exciting to be thinking about than dwelling into the thought of a world ending.

Too good to be true, that's what this is about. For almost 60 years, you have received the best entertainment men can ask for. Not only it introduced you to a lot of women we too have learned to love, PLAYBOY did and continue to provide a comprehensive selection of the best and rarest interviews, literary pieces, intelligent editorials and sophisticated forms of amusement. PLAYBOY's influence has transcended all over the world with all of its indulgence. But if there is one thing that we have always been proud of aside from our founder Hugh Hefner and his legacy, it is PLAYBOY's commitment to advocate individual rights and freedom. This year, it will all be about reinforcing this passion.

To start our year, we couldn't be more honored to have an icon, the Philippines' finest and most celebrated literary giant, F. Sionil Jose as this issue's Man of the Month. He is probably the first Filipino to put in a simple but powerful rhetoric everyone's hope and frustrations for a great Philippines – "How can you not be angry when you are a Filipino?" Now, that's the question you have to answer. But shake it off for a while, we still have Charlie Sheen and Dax Shepard in PLAYBOY Interview and 20Q respectively to keep you warmed up.

Of course, a great selection of our favorites is here. This issue, we picked the outstanding cars for 2013 for you, man. The best performers, the most handsome, the most sophisticated, and the most intelligent, just like how a Playboy should be. Moreover, what I am really excited about is our historical cover of Playmates from across the globe. For the first time in PLAYBOY's 60 years of history, we were able to gather in one country these global magnetic beauties for a rare cover pictorial and get to know these ladies from different cultures and places a little bit better.

Indeed, it's more fun in the Philippines.

ADAM PENN

PLAYBILL

NIKKI GARDE-TORRES

Nikki Torres is an events manager, a cultural worker and a writer. As an Events Manager for the Cultural Center of the Philippines, she has acted as Production and Stage Manager of many local and international festivals among which are the PASINAYA Open House Festival, The Virgin Labfest, the National Theater Festival and the Wi-Fi Contemporary Dance Festival. In her free time, Nikki is a freelance writer. She is also a lover of children and young adult's literature.

JOMEL GRUTAS

Jomel Grutas is a 23-year old Assistant Manager in one of the largest banks in the Philippines. He earned his Master's degree in Economics just a couple of years after being conferred an AB in Economics, magna cum laude in 2010. Goal-oriented but definitely not a bookworm-type of guy, he would rather spend the weekends with his drinking and/or travel buddies.

MARCO MANZONI

Marco Manzoni was a real estate developer and engineer who fell in love with the Philippines before finally settling here, first in Manila then in Boracay. This move to live on the white sands, according to him, was "fulfilling the dream I always had since I was a kid."

RAP HERNANDEZ

A person who enjoys alternative and extreme sports, Rap Hernandez was a varsity fencer all throughout high school and college. He had a brief stint in the Philippine National Fencing Team but was sidetracked by other sports. He is currently active in the local flag football, paintball, and wake boarding scenes. On weekends he can be found in one or all of the three.

CARLOS DEL PRADO

Carlos del Prado has been writing little bits of his work in notebooks for awhile. He is suspicious of books with nice covers, but has bought more of them than he can count. He lives with his family and two cats named Candy & Hot Pot, both of whom were mistaken as being female. This is the first piece he's done for PLAYBOY.

CASEY MORADA

Casey Morada graduated with a degree in English Studies from UP Diliman. She loves reading and is an impulsive book buyer. Writing is both her passion and craft.

PLAYBOY

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While the rest of the country is in a running frenzy, Rap Hernandez waxes poetic about the virtues of fencing as a sport to get into better shape.

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An experience in Boracay needs to be savored from sun-up to sundown. Here, Boracay resident Marco Manzoni shares with us a 24-hour rundown of the best ways to enjoy the island that never sleeps.

▶ *See more of KIOMI on pages 86-87*

AT THE RECENT PLAYBOY'S ROCK THE RABBIT, KIOMI WAS OUR RED BUNNY WHO DEFINITELY PAINTED THE WHOLE TOWN SCARLET.

PLAYBOY BECOMING ATTRACTION

Kiomi Tuibec

With a towering height and a perfect 34-25-36 God-given figure, Kiomi was built to be one of Manila's blooming models. This month, she shares with Playboy her added determination to living the life of a full time model. "It was during high school when almost everybody noticed that I can definitely make a mark in the modeling industry with my height, slim body, beauty and charm." says the lovely babe. And it was long before we at PLAYBOY noticed this lady. At the recent Playboy's Rock the Rabbit, Kiomi was our Red Bunny who definitely painted the whole town scarlet. "It was such an honor to be part of PLAYBOY's event. In the near future, if I will be given a chance, I would love to be a Playmate, too!"
And yes, we will have you over and over again, Kiomi.

Photography by JEFF INFANTE

V12

Powered by a 1.5 L V12 engine, the first ever Ferrari road car was the 1947 125 Sport Ferrari.

205 MPH

The Continental GT Speed coupe of Bently is the fastest Bently yet with a top speed of 205 mph.

DECEMBER 1, 1914

Maserati: Established on December 1, 1914 in Bologna, Italy. There are seven Maserati brothers who were involved in the engineering, design, construction and the trademark of the car.

OCTOBER 30, 1963

Lamborghini: Founded on October 30, 1963 as Automobili Ferruccio Lamborghini S.p.A.

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Henry Poole & Co. : Henry Poole & Co is a gentleman's bespoke tailor located on no. 15 Saville Row in London and is considered the inevntor of the dinner suit or Tuxedo. It was founded in 1806.

MARCH 15, 1906

Rolls Royce: Founded as Rolls Royce Limited by Charles Stuart Rolls and Sir Frederick Henry Royce on March 15, 1906.

7/29/1958

On July 29, 1958, Eisenhower signed the National Aeronautics and Space Act, establishing the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) which began America's space race against Russia to go to the moon.

Three hundred year old Champagne from the Heidsieck vineyard can now be bought for $275,000

$275,000

1st

Dom Perignon, the first prestige cuvée Champagne, is introduced. The champagne was an idea proposed by Englishman Laurence Venn. The first vintage of Dom Pérignon was 1921 and was only released for sale in 1936.

MAY 1923

Le Mans: The 1967 twenty-four hour Le Mans race was the venue for the first known instance in a major race where a winning driver celebrated his victory by spraying champagne instead of drinking it. The first 24-hour Le Mans race was held on 26 and 27 May 1923.

JULY 13, 1930

FIFA: The Inaugural tournament took place in Uruguay on July 13 to 30, 1930.

THE COVER

The Women of The World

Mateja Gaspar, Sky Aisuru, Kasia Danyz, Kandra Van Der Bank
Katarina Sarkova, Irina Georgescu, Anastasija Budic, Lingita Lina Bopulu
Katherine Bautista, Clivia Treidl, Zimra Geurts

PHOTOGRAPHED BY RAYMOND SALDAÑA

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Layout Artists & Illustrators	RAVE APILADO
	JEFFREY INFANTE
Editorial Assistant	SKY AISURU

COPY EDITOR
JOSE VICTOR TORRES

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
ERIC SPITZNAGEL, DAVID HOCHMAN, GAVIN EDWARDS, DENIS JOHNSON, MICHEL ANDRE CONSTANT, BHENJO TOOR, CARLOS DEL PRADO, LIVERTY BEZ, FATIMA TORRES, RAP HERNANDEZ, VOLTAIRE LOZADA, JOMEL B. GRUTAS, NIKKI GARDE-TORRES, MARCO MAZONI, CASEY MORADA

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS & ILLUSTRATORS
STEVE SHAW, DAVID ROSE, MATTHIAS CLAMER, MARCO MANZONI

CONTRIBUTING STYLIST, HAIR & MAKE-UP ARTIST
VINCE FLORES, EMMANUEL CONCEPCION, JASON ALCORIZA, VINCE CORPUS, EDWIN RAMOS

ADVERTISING & MARKETING SALES

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Media Relations Head & Sr. Advertising Asst.	JOBIE REPRADO
Junior Advertising Assistant	MARC ADONIS RODRIGUEZ

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Head of Circulation	MARIO FERMIL
Head of Logistics	MARY ANNE AMBROCIO
Circulation Coordinators	RODOLFO DEL MUNDO
	JORNE DELGADO
	PATRICK IÑIGO GRANADOS

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information Technology Head	JEFFREY INFANTE

PLAYBOY SUITE
UNIT 1004 TOWER B GOLDLOOP TOWERS, ESCRIVA DRIVE
ORTIGAS CENTER, PASIG CITY, 1605 PHILIPPINES
HOTLINE: 0917-PLAYBOY

LEGAL
ATTY. BEULAH COELI C. FIEL ATTY. JHONELLE ESTRADA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS - MR. ALLAN L. YAP

PLAYBOY PHILIPPINES , INC.
President & Chief Executive Officer SAM CU
ADAMOSMEDIA PUBLISHING, INC.

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Editor-in-Chief

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DEAR PLAYBOY

BIGGER, BOLDER and BETTER 2012

Congratulations on your success last 2012!

First stop: the January/February issue with Valerie Concepcion was a really a good start. Then LJ Reyes was hot to start with in the early summer heat. Your Fourth Anniversary issue did justice to every Filipino when you placed Wilma Doesnt on the cover. It came as a surprise although I was really waiting for her before to be on the cover of PLAYBOY. May/June was a good issue and Nina on the cover was a work of genius. The July issue is as good as well putting the much-awaited Juliana Palermo on the cover. Iwa for August is also amazing. Mocha for September was the howler for 2012. I was really waiting for them to be on the cover. The Playmate issue was also a real howler with Sky very high with that cover. The December issue was a good ender for the year.

Thanks, PLAYBOY Philippines. With 2013 already here, what surprises are in store for your loyal readers?
Happy New Year!

Shinonsouke Subaru Sumeragi 35

IT WILL NOT BE A SURPRISE IF WE TELL YOU RIGHT AWAY. BUT WHAT WE PROMISE YOU IS IT WILL BE MUCH BETTER THAN 2012!

DREAMS DO COME TRUE

The Playmate of the Year Philippine Gala was an amazing event! It was a dream come true for a man like me who has always dreamed of being in the PLAYBOY Mansion one day. You gave me, and other people who attended a chance to somehow live up our PLAYBOY dream! Thank you very much, PLAYBOY Philippines. I hope for a repeat next year!

Warren, 45

YOU ARE WELCOME! OFCOURSE, THERE IS A REPEAT.

BELLE-LICIOUS

I LOVE YOUR MISS NOVEMBER, PLAYMATE BELLE! I LIKE HOW YOU GUYS HAVE TASTE FOR DIFFERENT KINDS OF LADIES AND NOT JUST THE FAIR-SKINNED ONES. I PERSONALLY PREFER A MORENA. AND IN BELLE'S SHOOT, YOU MADE EVERYONE SEE HOW MORENA GIRLS SHINE MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE! KUDOS!

PLAYBOY APPRECIATES AND EMPOWERS ALL WOMEN. WE COULDN'T BE HAPPIER TO HAVE BELLE ON OUR PAGES TOO.

HUNTER

I saw in Facebook that you guys finally have a store in Sta. Lucia Mall which really does well especially for collectors like me because all of the issues since 2008 are up for sale there. Thing is, I live in Alabang and it's just all the way across for me. Are you planning to put up another one anywhere near my place? Or is there any other way for me to complete my collection? I miss some from 2008 and 2009. Let me know! Thanks!

Harold, 30

*YOU CAN COMPLETE YOUR PLAYBOY PHILIPPINES COLLECTION BY VISITING OUR STORE IN STA. LUCIA EAST MALL. WOULD YOU RATHER WHINE FOR THE LONG RIDE OR GET YOUR A** OFF YOUR COUCH TO THE DRIVER'S SEAT TO GET YOUR COPIES? IF YOU ARE A WHINER THEN YOU CAN JUST PROBABLY WAIT FOR THE STORE IN ALABANG TO OPEN ANYTIME THIS YEAR. THAT IS IF YOU CAN STILL WAIT.*

LAST HURRAH

How do I get PLAYBOY to do a party for me and my friend? We're both getting married next year and we're planning a double bachelor's party somewhere! Of course we want it to be as epic as possible (yet still very classy). Can you give me a number? Thanks!

Santi, 32

COLLECTOR'S ITEM

The October – November issue was great! I was able to get it signed by all the international Playmates who came in during the autograph signing at Sta. Lucia Mall. I think my magazine now costs about a million. Ha ha! Thank you guys!

Collins, 28

EMAIL US AND LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN DO.

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE, FUTURE MILLIONAIRE.

Send us your comments and suggestions.

CONTACT US AT playboy@pbphil.com

PLAYBOY ADVISOR

There's this hot chick at work. Long black hair, pleasant face and a pair of boobs you can never take your eyes away from. Plus she's very smart too. The best part of this cliché story is that she is showing an interest for me too! I guess after a really bad break up from my long time partner, I do deserve this lady. Okay, so here's the part that every jealous guy has been waiting for. Word is that she has vaginal spasms. Sad. The last guy she dated; they ended up in the emergency room and I confirmed it. I don't want to be trapped there and into a hospital for that reason anytime soon! Should I do it?

--- Patrick, 32, Imus, Cavite

A trip to the hospital emergency room is not exactly a fun way to end an evening with a date, especially when people you don't know will try to (literally) separate you. There are several reasons for vaginal spasms and some of it are psychological like some negative attitudes towards sex; fear of getting knocked up; or a traumatic relationship. So, maybe you should take it slowly and get her to like you and be relaxed with you. Since, she is also showing an interest in you, she will also have that confidence to get over her – the medical term is vaginismus – so you can enjoy each other's company.

It's my twenty-sixth year of being an independent Filipina and I'm currently dating this guy from California. For the first time, I gave in to a man with a different nationality. It's actually very exciting. Our differences in culture and humor make our dating more interesting and our sex very, very hot. We do it every day and anywhere. Yesterday, I felt a sharp pain whenever I pee. It became painful to a point that I avoid taking a piss if possible. Should I consult a doctor? Or is it normal for someone who gets wild sex from a guy with a huge package?

--- Sandara, 28, Pasig City

We suggest that you see a doctor immediately.

After a long day at work, I saw my 10-year old son browsing through my recent PLAYBOY magazine. My jaw dropped. I'm a cool dad and I always told myself that I will be one. But, now that I finally see myself in one of the most common stories ever, I don't know how to react. Any advice on how to go about this?

--- ARTHUR, 44, ANTIPOLO, RIZAL

Welcome to the world of being a parent to an up-and-coming young adult. One thing you should NOT do is scold your son about reading the magazine. It will make him more curious and he will do his best to look for it and finish reading it if you're not at home. You have to explain to him that what he read was something adults only read and that kids like him have reading materials for their age. And since he is going ask about those women with no clothes on, tell him… well… there are things he should only know when he reaches a certain age. Since it seems your kid likes to read, getting him a good book or comic book to make him forget what he saw for the meantime. Then make sure you put your stash of PLAYBOY magazines someplace safe from your kid's prying eyes.

How does one say no to his boss? He has been nothing but nosy ever since he got separated from his wife. I pity the guy. But come on, he even third wheels on my dates with my lady. And when I finally told him one time that my date with Anna is special and that he can't join, he was so pissed at me the next day at work and he gave more work load than I can handle. What should I do?

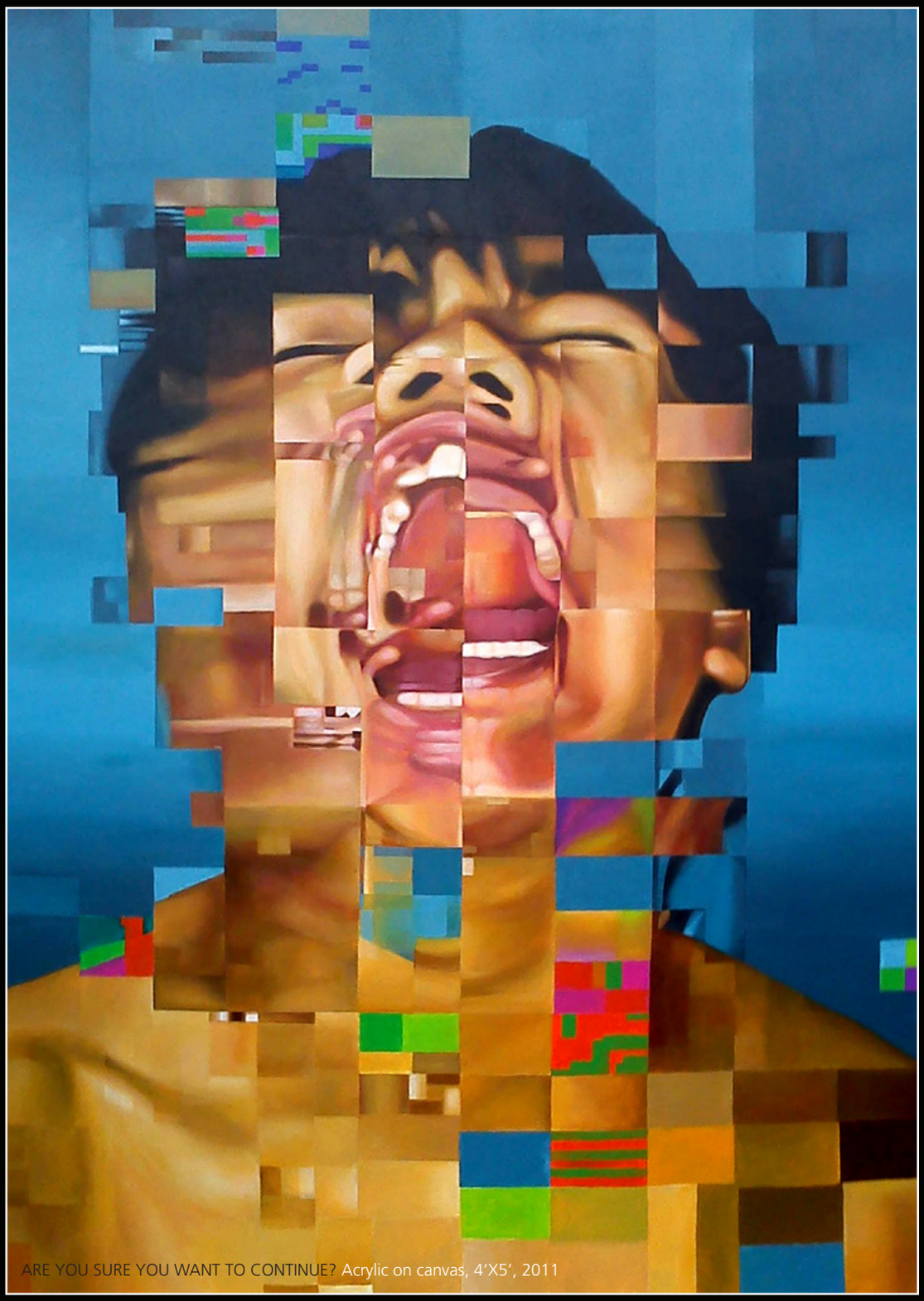
--- Melvin, 30, Taguig City

Either your boss is so immature that he doesn't know how to handle his personal life and can't see that he is ruining another one or he is simply jealous of what you have. Either way, since the first explanation to butt out of your relationship just annoyed him, don't stop explaining to him that he is becoming a nuisance. If he still acts like a brat, we suggest you look for another job where you can enjoy your relationship with Anna and have a boss who doesn't bother your personal life.

Kriz Hernandez
ASIAN BEAUTY

PLAYLIST

GADGETS.LIFESTYLE.MOVIES.MUSIC.BOOKS.ART



ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO CONTINUE? Acrylic on canvas, 4'X5', 2011

GERECHO INIEL CRUZ OR NILL (AS HE ASKED ME TO CALL HIM) IS A GRADUATE OF THE FINE ARTS PROGRAM OF THE FAR EASTERN UNIVERSITY (FEU) WITH A MAJOR IN ADVERTISING. He's been painting since 2005, but it was during his fourth year in college that he decided to follow a maxim that art should be both a powerful medium with a message to involve a viewer with issues that he believes to be important to himself and other people.

PLAYBOY: How did you get into painting?

Nill: It started as something I really enjoyed in college. I really liked drawing in high school, so it sort of progressed from there. When I moved to FEU from the Technological University of the Philippines, the graduating class in my course influenced me and some others to get into painting, and from there we started joining competitions, and before I knew it, I saw my paintings on walls for group shows. It all went on from there.

PLAYBOY: Where do you find the things you like to paint? Your inspiration and all that?

Nill: When I was in college, a lot of paintings that were being done were visualizations of things people saw. I thought, why couldn't I bring together painting and the concept of an advertising campaign, so that I could show my art and have something to say as well, something to advocate. At the time, I was advocating a lot about preserving the environment and things like that. Nowadays, I still advocate a similar message. However I like leaving the painting for the viewer to decide on what I'm trying to say. The image is there, but the message is yours to come up with. (Interview by Carlos Del Prado)

For more information, Nill Cruz can be emailed at nilldotcom@yahoo.com

THE PLAYLIST OFFERS WHAT EVERY PLAYBOY READER WANTS—RELEVANT REVIEWS AND INFORMATIVE LIFESTYLE NEWS. YOU, AS A PLAYBOY READER, NEED TO KNOW STUFF. AND WE ARE HERE TO GIVE YOU WHAT YOU NEED.

HTC BUTTERFLY

After much anticipation, the international version of the HTC Droid DNA and the HTC J Butterfly is finally here. With a crystal-clear, 440PPI, 5-inch, 1080p full HD display, this device is certainly worth the wait. The HTC butterfly comes with an 8 megapixel camera in the back and a 2.1 megapixel front camera with 1080p video capture capability. It has a 1.5 GHz Quad-Core S4 processor with 2 GB of RAM that yields tremendously fast performance. It also boasts of a built-in amplifier for Beats Audio and HTC's ImageSense technology. The HTC Butterfly is slimmer, curvier and more comfortable than any other phone of its kind. (Casey Morada)

SONY 16-50MM RETRACTABLE ZOOM LENS

The SELP-1650 is Sony's first Alpha lens with an electrically driven zoom mechanism. As soon as the camera is turned on, the lens automatically extends and becomes ready for shooting. It has a dual function control ring used for both zooming and manual focus. It measures a mere 1-3/16" (30.2mm) when fully retracted but comes with a 3x magnification ratio covering 16 mm to 50 mm (24-75mm 35mm eq.) Equipped with one ED and four Aspherical elements, this high-performance lens is surprisingly compact. Its portability makes it the perfect choice for spontaneous shootings. (C.M.)

NOKIA LUMIA 620

Together with flagship Lumia 920 and midrange Lumia 820, the Lumia 620 completes the lineup of Windows Phone 8 smartphones as the entry level device. It sports a 3.8-inch ClearBlack display that has the same sunlight readability enhancements as its predecessors. It comes with 8GB of internal memory with Micro SD support up to 64GB, a 5 megapixel camera with LED flash, a VGA front camera, NFC connectivity and a dual-core Snapdragon S4 processor. With emphasis on a younger audience, the Lumia 620 has Nokia Music that provides free streaming of ad-free tracks. To cap it all, it's the most affordable in Nokia's range of WP8 smartphones. (C.M.)

NEW YEAR'S BEST BUYS!

PLAYBOYS TAKE ON BEST GADGETS AND GREAT FINDS THIS NEW YEAR!

Technology is taking a big leap this 2013. Android and smart phones lead the competition. You don't have to own everything, the secret is just buying what's useful to your specific need.

BLACKBERRY 10

Blackberry's next operating system will make a big leap from version 7 to 10. The upcoming OS follows RIM's three major principles: Integrated, Social and Beautiful. It features a UI called Blackberry Flow which allows users to switch or open a new application without having to end the previous app. With the new Blackberry Hub, notifications, email, calendar events and invitations are all in one place. The new BBM 7.0 has a new feature called BBM Voice that allows users to make free calls over Wi-Fi. Two new BB handsets that will run on the new OS will also be released. (C.M.)

FUJITSU LIFEBOOK 2013

Also known as the super device, the Lifebook 2013 uses the best of every popular gadget in a single package. It features a portable tablet that can be housed inside a laptop case to improve functionality. It also provides slots for smartphones and digital cameras and can be used as a wireless, pressure-sensitive keypad. The beauty of this set-up is that all devices can be synced and updated simultaneously from the same hub. With Lifebook 2013, there is no longer any need to operate a multitude of devices and consume a lot of processing power. Users will be on top of everything with only one device. (C.M.)

PHOTO SOURCES: http://store.sony.com, http://conversations.nokia.com, http://www.htc.com, http://global.blackberry.com, http://tablet-news.com

PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN

REPLICA MEN'S SOCCER JERSEY

Soccer enthusiasts will get a treat with the 2012/2013 Paris Saint-Germain Replica Men's Soccer Jersey. Honoring the PSG (a professional association football club based in Paris, France) with club embroidery and graphics team details, the jersey delivers comfort with its Dri-FIT fabric that wicks away sweat. It is made of layered mesh for lightweight breathability and has a rib crew neck with interior taping for a comfortable fit. It comes in Midnight Navy and Football White colors and certainly boasts of team pride. (C.M.)

GC MEN'S WATCHES

Gc offers three Smart Luxury men's watches, the Gc-4 Executive, Gc SlimClass 42mm and Gc-3 AquaSport. Gc Smart Luxury watches are sophisticated Swiss Made men's timepieces that embody quality, design and detail at a remarkable price point. The Gc-4 Executive adds a bold elegance to the young, modern and professional man. To make a more refined and sophisticated statement, the Gc SlimClass 42mm is the ideal choice. The combination of styling appeal and sporting performance of the Gc-3 AquaSport makes it the perfect timepiece for the young sportsman. (C.M.)

iCLUTCH

With tablet devices coming out one after another, the iClutch is the perfect to-go clutch bag. True to its namesake, the iClutch is specifically tailored to fit an iPad device but can also fit other tablet devices. It can hold cards, keys and other essential items. There are many available designs and colors options ranging from a sleek All White style to Playful Pops in bright orange. There are also zipped document wallet styles in blue that is perfect for every occasion. (C.M.)

GUCCI MEN'S BELT

Gucci offers a wide variety of men's belt to choose from. One of the best choices this year is the square buckled belt with dark palladium hardware that comes with beige/ebony diamante plus black leather trim. For the sleek and sophisticated look, the men's belt with enamel Gucci plaque buckle makes a great option. It is made of black leather and has tone on tone enamel Gucci buckle and shiny palladium hardware. Each belt flaunts a well-balanced mix of elegant and fashionable styles. (C.M.)

PHOTO SOURCES: http://store.nike.com/us, http://www.pinstripemag.com, http://weconnectfashion.com, http://www.emenaccessories.com

APPS RELEASE!

QUICKEN MOBILE

Quicken is a computer software that manages your finances – from bank account balances to credit cards and bill payments – all in one program. With its 2013 update, Quicken launched Quicken Mobile - a free mobile support app that would allow you to check on your data anytime, anywhere. Depending on your settings, it will also let you sync data to and from your computer to your mobile gadget with just a couple of clicks and swipes. The 2013 version also comes with an alert feature which sends updates via email and SMS every time changes to your account has been done. It also doubles as a security feature — the constant update lets you know if there are suspicious transactions happening with your money. Quicken Mobile app is available for both iOS and Android users. (Liverty Bez)

GAMES

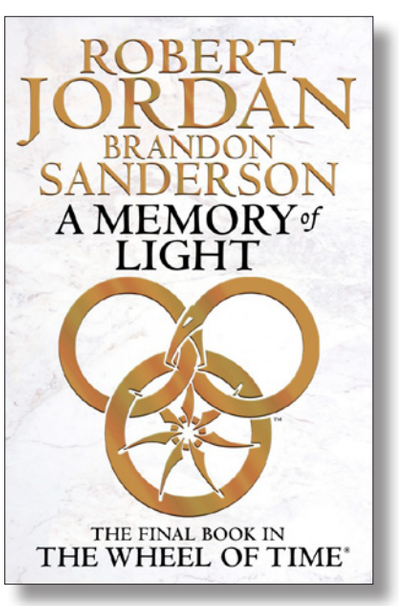
SNIPER: GHOST WARRIOR 2

After being plagued with numerous delays, fans of Sniper: Ghost Warrior can finally get their hands on the sequel to the successful and addicting first-person shooter. Like its predecessor, this game involves a lot of stealth and assassination, but expect projectile dysfunctions as well. While the first game had the user taking control of multiple characters to tell various sides of the story, it seems likely that this sequel will focus on the missions of only one soldier: Private Security Consultant Captain Cole Anderson as he takes on different missions in Sajevo, Burma, and Tibet. Watch out for an early level set in the Philippines! The game will be available for Windows, Xbox 360, and Playstation 3. (Niki Yarte)

DMC: DEVIL MAY CRY

What makes hack and slash games even more alluring is the idea of causing wanton destruction to the game environment. With the latest in the Devil May Cry series, gamers will get a city that's rife for that very purpose. Limbo City is quite literally alive and it wants Dante dead, and so do the demons that inhabit it. Those who've played the previous games will notice that this Dante is younger as this game actually takes place in a parallel universe. Game play is also a tad different with aptly named Angel and Devil Modes that toggle between two sets of swords and abilities. The game will be available for Windows, Xbox 360, and Playstation 3. (N.Y.)

BOOKS



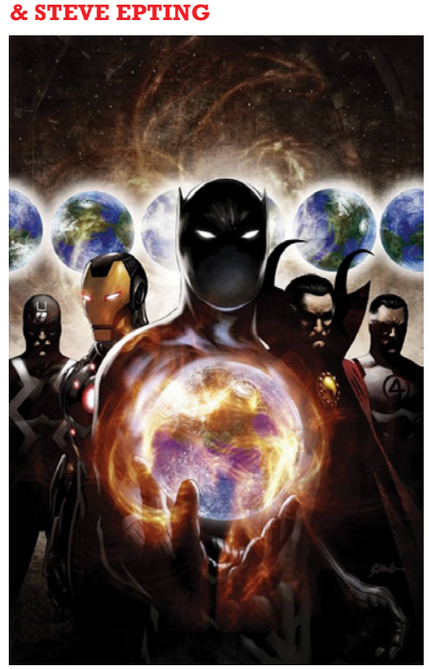
A MEMORY OF LIGHT

ROBERT JORDAN & BRANDON SANDERSON

The end of Robert Jordan's epic fantasy saga should come as good news to readers who have been following "The Wheel of Time" since the first book, "The Eye of the World", which came out in 1990. Brandon Sanderson (Mistborn) again shares writing duties much like the last two books following Jordan's passing in 2007. Initial reviews to his final manuscript have so far been positive with a promise of fitting endings given to the multitude of characters Jordan had developed over the course of the series. Eagle-eyed fans will notice a distinctive change in the cover art style as Michael Whelan takes over for Darrel K. Sweet, who passed away last year prior to production of the book. (N.Y.)

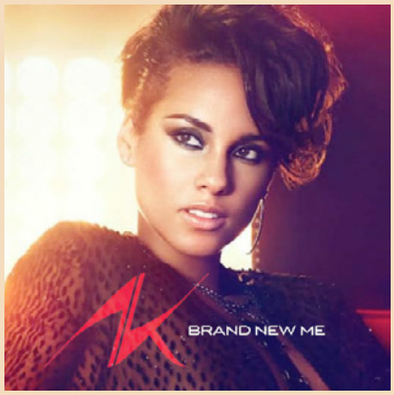
NEW AVENGERS

JONATHAN HICKMAN & STEVE EPTING



True Believers know this group by another name: the Illuminati – that clandestine group which includes such movers in Marvel lore as Iron Man, Mister Fantastic, Doctor Strange, Black Bolt, and the Sub-Mariner, who secretly plot the movement of the superhero community. As part of the Marvel NOW! series of new titles, Jonathan Hickman, who also pens the main Avengers book, once again pools them together in this comics series, along with The Beast and Black Panther. In the writer's own words, "Avengers is the day book and New Avengers is night. Avengers is how we want the world to be, New Avengers is how it is. One book is about life, one is about death." New Avengers comes out twice monthly. (N.Y.)

PHOTO SOURCES: http://quicken.intuit.com, http://www.sniperghostwarrior.com, www.devilmaycry.com, www.amazon.com, http://www.newsarama.com



ALICIA KEYS
BRAND NEW ME

The cover that didn't make it. "Brand New Me" was said to be considered as Alicia Keys' fifth album title track but was changed for some reason or another. The song is one of her first collaborations with U.K. singer-songwriter Emeli Sandé. Still known for her success in piano-driven songs, this is another one to add on our list. Not only does it set up a triumphant mood that is said to be possessed consistently throughout the album, but it's also for the heartbroken (yes, even men) who are ready to start the year right. (Sky Aisuru)

BRUNO MARS
MONEY MAKE HER SMILE

Here's something that we all know about women. Bruno Mars' "Money Make Her Smile" has a hint of a rock and electro-pop beat. From his recent album "Unorthodox Jukebox" released last month, he seems to be done on his honeymoon stage singing "Just the Way You Are." Bruno claims that he wants to give his some variation to audience. Since he always showed favor to the music of rock groups like The Police, Led Zeppelin and The Beatles, this track is something that paid off. (S.Y.)

M.I.A.
ATTENTION

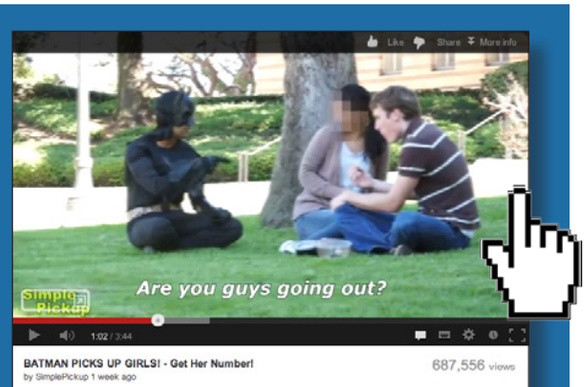
These days, generosity sounds impossible. But not for this English recording artist, songwriter and painter. Known for combining electronic, alternative, hip hop, and dance music to her compositions, M.I.A. leaked her very own song entitled "AtTENTion" to her fans but left them in question whether this song will be part of her upcoming album "Matangi." The song involves shouts and whispers beautifully strung together. Still, only M.I.A. can do all that. (S.Y.)

WIZ KHALIFA
ONLY N**** IN FIRST CLASS

Wiz Khalifa, a 25-year old rapper from Pittsburgh, is someone who sticks to the season of celebration all year round. He earned a place in the music business in 2010 with the hit song "Black and Yellow" out of his debut studio album "Rolling Papers" which quickly peaked at Number One on the Billboard Hot 100. Khalifa didn't get a hard time climbing up the charts since his first mixtape in 2005. He released his first album "Show and Prove" in 2006 and, a year after, signed on with Warner Bros. Records. In 2010, he moved companies and signed on with Atlantic Records. Following the birth of his son, Taylor Gang, a baby with wife Amber Rose, Wiz Khalifa presents another hip-hop album that talks about a lot of cannabis but this time, also expect his sweet side with "Got Everything." While his carrier single "Work Hard, Play Hard" has already reached platinum in the United States. O.N.I.F.C. is not all ear-pounding though, "Remember You" featuring the Canadian R&B artist, The Weeknd, gives you melancholy echoes and blues. (***S.A.***)

VIDEO

SIMPLE PICKUP

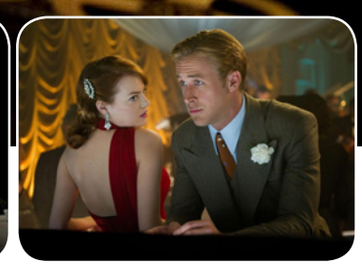


While Boy Pickup's lines are meant to solicit amusement more than literally getting a girl to surrender her digits, the trio of Jason, Jesse, and Kong of Simple Pickup actually gets the job done. The best part is that they film the process for the brothers to see! Even decked in the most ridiculous outfits (short shorts and tank tops for that gay vibe) or thrust into the oddest of circumstances (use the word "vagina" in a pick-up line), they still manage to charm girls into divulging their private lives. And they say it's all about confidence. Their YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/SimplePickup) has proven popular with almost half a million subscribers and more than 50 million video views. (N.Y)

PHOTO SOURCES: http://hiphop-n-more.com, http://www.hipstrumentals.com, http://www.brunomars.com, http://www.pagesdigital.com, www.youtube.com/SimplePickup

GANGSTER SQUAD

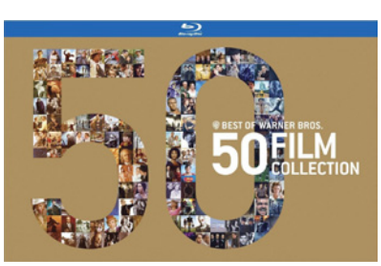
THIS MOVIE ADAPTATION FROM PAUL LIEBERMAN'S TALES FROM THE GANGSTER SQUAD REVOLVES AROUND THE LAPD'S FIGHT TO STOP THE MAFIA INVASION IN THE EAST COAST DURING THE MID-1900S. Mob king Mickey Cohen (Sean Penn) runs the seemingly uncontrollable town and getting rich from drugs, guns, and prostitution pay-offs. Enter Sgt. John O'Mara (Josh Brolin) and Jerry Wooters (Ryan Gosling) who team up to put an end to Cohen's reign. Under the direction of Zombieland's Ruben Fleischer, Gangster Squad will surely satisfy moviegoers craving for some pure hardcore action. No release date for the Philippines yet, but the movie is scheduled to hit US theaters on the second week of January. (***Liverty Bez***)



DVD

TAKEN 2

The action-thriller sequel to the blockbuster franchise Taken featuring Liam Neeson (Bryan Mills), Famke Janssen (Lenore), and Maggie Grace (Kim), can now be enjoyed at the comfort of our home. 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment officially announced the franchise's Blu-ray release in the United States on January 15. The Taken 2 Blu-ray release comes with special features such as the unrated and theatrical cut, deleted and extended scenes, an alternative ending, and a Black Ops Field Manual. (L.B.)



BEST OF WARNER BROS. 50 FILM COLLECTION

This collection is a must-have for movie junkies and Warner Bros. fanatic. Set to be released in the US on January 29, the Warner Bros. 90 Years Anniversary Special is said to be the largest Blu-ray release yet. Some of the movies included in the set are Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, Casablanca, The Matrix, The Matrix, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, The Dark Knight, The Hangover, and Inception. The 52-disc set is presented in a book-style premium packaging which also includes two exclusive documentaries (Tales from the Warner Bros. Lot and The Warner Bros. Lot Tour), commentaries, film-specific extras, postcards, and a limited edition poster. (L.B.)

HANSEL & GRETEL: WITCH HUNTERS

Jeremy Renner (from Bourne Legacy and The Avengers) and Gemma Arterton (from Prince of Persia and Quantum of Solace) team up in this unique adaptation of the classic bedtime story which takes us fifteen years after the sibling's traumatic incident inside the gingerbread house. Kids no more, brother and sister grew up to be one of the most formidable team of bounty hunters all over the world. Pumped up with a combination of action-adventure and some dose of horror and dark humor, the movie is set to make you think twice about how the usual cutey-patootie fairy tale characters end up. Directed by Tommy Wirkola, Hansel and Gretel: Witch Hunters will hit Philippine cinemas this January. (L.B.)

PHOTO SOURCES: http://www.hanselandgretelmovie.com, http://gangstersquad.warnerbros.com, http://www.blu-ray.com

"I think you're going to like my New Year's resolution…!"

THE POWER OF

PESO

BY JOMEL B. GRUTAS

The hell I care, it's just a KTC (keep the change) amount. This was my usual response five years ago every time I hear about news regarding Peso appreciation. A dozen centavos seems to be immaterial if a single Peso can only give you satisfaction of a lemon-flavored candy. But today, it is more than just an "amalayer" thing for most Filipinos as more people are now directly affected by the trend while contemporary media has to educate the masses on its implications.

The Philippine Peso swiftly climbed to the P40 - $1 US exchange rate level after the manic Monday session last November 26 that closed at the reference rate of P40.90 to $1 US. The last time our local currency was seen that strong was in March 2008 when trading was pegged at the P40.81 to $1 exchange rate. Economic managers are expecting that it may even breach the P39 territory before the year ends as we are just at the advent of remittance season triggered by the fast approaching Yuletide celebration. If that happens, it will be our highest Peso valuation in thirteen years after we enjoyed the P39.95 rate in October, 1999.

So what's with those digits? It is still in our consciousness that the concept of gold and silver coins is still prevalent in these modern times. Our history teachers taught us that from the barter system, the ancient traders crafted a monetary system by assigning values to some precious metals used in traditional coinage. The heavier the money, the more purchasing power it has. This explains why Great Britain adopted the "Pounds Sterling" which no doubt came from that famous unit of mass while former Hispanic colonies have "Peso" which is a Spanish word for weight. (How I wish we go back to our old ways were money is made up of real gold but I think that's not anymore feasible today because bringing a bag of heavy metals for a shopping spree can be a good source of megastress.) Hence, it makes sense to just print paper bills and let its purchasing power depend on the reputation of whoever issues them.

Thanks to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other markets watchers, who hailed the Philippines as the emerging Southeast Asian Tiger and the strongest economy in Asia, other countries are now starting to recognize the slow yet continuous improvements in our political and economic condition. One concrete proof is the recent 10-mark leap to rank 65th out of 144 countries appraised in the 2012-2013 Global Competitiveness Report by the World Economic Forum (WEF). As a result, the Philippine Peso is now the best performing Asian currency with a 7.2% gain against the US Dollar for the first eleven months of this year surpassing the 3% expansion by the Singapore and Brunei Dollars. The Malaysian Ringgit stood still at 0.13% gain while the Indonesian Rupiah depreciated by 3.5% this year. Benchmarking with other Peso-bearing countries, our P41 exchange rate is far way stronger than Chile (481.00) and Colombia (1,823.00). However, it is comparatively inferior to the Dominican Republic (36.00), Cuba (23.00), Uruguay (19.00), Mexico (13.00), and Argentina (5.00).

So, just a friendly tip, if your date asks you why our Peso is persistently boosting its value against other currencies, you can easily give an impression that you are a nerdy type of guy by answering: "because there is an increasing demand for the Peso".

But, kidding aside, that statement is the simplest way of describing the recent scenario of the complex financial market. When we say that the the Philippine Peso is in demand, a lot of people are willing to buy Peso notes in lieu of foreign currency. As Dollars, Euros and other currencies enter the Filipino market, the tendency is to have them converted first into local denomination for ease of transaction. Tourist arrivals can be cited as a typical example where these 3.47M visitors recorded by the Department of Tourism from January to October 2012 have chipped-in an extra 9.18% of demand for the Peso vis-à-vis last year's record.

Now that we know how the power of the Peso fluctuates depending on the demand from the market, it is time to reveal the Yin-Yang forces in which this power emanates from: the regular remittances from Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) and the bulging investments from foreign financiers. Using the Chinese philosophy, remittances and investments are not opposing forces but rather complementary energies that interact to form a dynamic demand for the Peso. From these forces, we can get ample reasons to rejoice its intensifying power of the Peso. The exchange rate does not only mean that our money have upgraded in nominal terms. Those numbers (centavos) are just indicators of the reality that is

WHEN WE SAY THAT THE THE PHILIPPINE PESO IS IN DEMAND, A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE WILLING TO BUY PESO NOTES IN LIEU OF FOREIGN CURRENCY.

Photo source: www.pse.com.ph

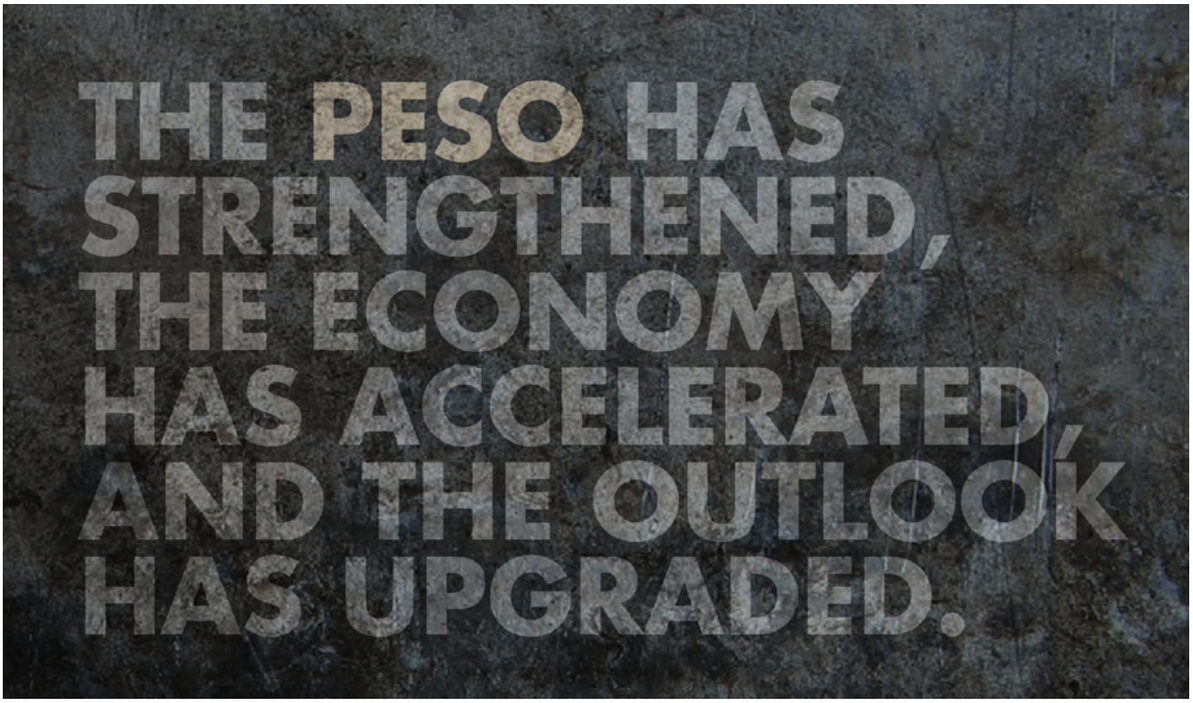
happening outside the financial market.

SO, JUST A FRIENDLY TIP, IF YOUR DATE ASKS YOU WHY OUR PESO IS PERSISTENTLY BOOSTING ITS VALUE AGAINST OTHER CURRENCIES, YOU CAN EASILY GIVE AN IMPRESSION THAT YOU ARE A NERDY TYPE OF GUY BY ANSWERING: "BECAUSE THERE IS AN INCREASING DEMAND FOR THE PESO".

We should be thankful to our 1.8M modern day heroes who are working hard abroad in order to provide decent food, clothing and shelter to every Filipino home. The overwhelming $17.3B a year remittance for 2012 created a demand for P709.3B as they enter Juan de la Cruz's pockets. This primarily translates into domestic consumption while some portion of it contributes to our national savings. Now that Pinoys have more money, they have the capacity to buy things that they want. This demand will be answered by the business side through the provision of necessary supply. Thus, economic activities are generated and the cycle goes on. As a domino effect, the real estate industry is in full bloom while the service sector has remained vigorous despite the deteriorating economy in the Euro zone and the United States.

(continued on page 94)

...POWER OF PESO (continued from page 26)



It is funny yet true that the aggregate income of Filipinos is more than enough to sustain our local economic activities while those developed countries in the West are struggling on how to reverse the slowdown in their market. Without these habitual fund transfers, our economy could be as sluggish as the global market. No wonder that a 7.1% GDP growth rate was achieved for the third quarter of this year versus a 3.2% rate in 2011 making us the country with the best

performing economy in Southeast Asia. In times of recession, the best way to beat it is to speed up spending and consumption to slow down the stagnation. The mere fact that you are reading this article already manifests that you are giving a significant contribution in accelerating the consumption cycle. So if it happens that you just borrowed this magazine from a friend, go and grab your own copy and be part of the next round of GDP growth computation.

The secondary powerhouse of the Peso resembles that of the remittances from OFWs but this time it is generated by non-Filipinos. Foreign fund inflow surges as foreign investors are docking into our havens being the "sweetest spot" within the sweet spot of Southeast Asia. This huge volume of inflows from foreign investments is a concrete reflection of an outstanding performance that the Philippine economy is portraying. Our strong macroeconomic fundamentals resulted to a growing confidence by these investors in our economy, viewing it as a robust and resilient one. This year's inflation rate remained benign at 3.1% while sound debt management was commended by foreign institutions due to its continuous financial consolidation. All three major rating agencies (Fitch, Moody's, and Standard & Poor's) unanimously upgraded our credit rating to just one notch below investment grade coupled with a positive outlook in the coming months. With all these policy reforms and market updates, 2013 may usher a new campaign ad like "Investing is more Fun in the Philippines".

We are in dire need of Foreign Direct Investments to foster expansion of different businesses in the locality while at the same time diversifying our exposure to a single form of investment. Right now, we are heavily reliant on Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) as a major source of employment with 640,000 direct employment last 2011. Our eighth-month Foreign Direct Investments is doing well with its $1.038B level considering that foreign investors nowadays are extra cautious with their fund placements in developing countries like the Philippines. However, this figure is dwarfed by outstanding FDIs of our neighboring countries especially Indonesia. Our complicated laws on putting up businesses in the country are the major hindrances to these potential cash inflows.

Our Peso is strong and many entrepreneurs are happy with that. But how will this affect the lives of ordinary people? Let's say a foreign brand of food chain is selling their signature big burger in foreign denomination at $2 each. With the P41 to $1 exchange rate, you only need to cash out P82 to buy it compared to the P98 conversion three years ago. That's a whopping 16% mark-down, enough to be considered a "student discount". To those who are fond of road trips, if the price of diesel remained constant at $1 per liter, an average full tank today would cost you P2,050 only. That's P150 cheaper than what you spent for the same refuel last January.

Indeed, the world is round even among the Filipinos. The sharp Peso appreciation for this year sheds light to our once gloomy economy but at the same time deprives happiness to those situated on the other side. It is absolutely bad news from the point of view of our OFWs and exporters who are receiving dollars as their revenue. This is now the time when the government should intervene in the market not by stopping the Peso from appreciating. Policies and programs should be launched in order to cushion the adverse effect of this development to certain sectors. Tax exemptions and incentives mechanism are some of the conventional steps which can be considered and enhanced to help our struggling heroes. We must make sure that nobody is left behind as we move on to our goal of placing the Philippines at the "centerfold" of the global market.

WITH ALL THESE POLICY REFORMS AND MARKET UPDATES, 2013 MAY USHER A NEW CAMPAIGN AD LIKE "INVESTING IS MORE FUN IN THE PHILIPPINES".

As the Web Slinger superhero said, "With great power comes great responsibility". Now that our economy is given that rare opportunity to rebound and establish its own identity in the international community, we should exhaust all the necessary steps to ensure its sustainability. 2012 may be the end of the world for other countries but I strongly believe that 2013 will mark the renaissance of Filipino race. The Peso has strengthened, the economy has accelerated, and the outlook has upgraded. There is no reason for you to remain stationary and just wait for the others

BRITTNEY PALMER

A MOVING SHAKESPEAREAN MASTERPIECE

WRITTEN BY BHENJAR TOOR
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE SHAW

WHAT'S IN A NAME THAT IF YOU COMBINE SHAKESPEAREAN PLAYS, ROCKSTAR PAINTINGS, UFC FIGHTING, AND A GORGEOUS BODY THAT WOULD MAKE THE MAYAN PREDICTION OF DOOM NOT HALF AS EXCITING AS SEEING A STUNNINGLY BEAUTIFUL FIGURE WALKING IN AN OCTAGONAL RING?

ontracted to
nbright eyes,
thy foe, to thy
elf too cruel.

Yes, Brittney Palmer is just one of the few who personifies such an image.

Clad in a bikini while walking through the octagonal ring in between rounds, Brittney makes avid fans run the risk of having an eye-gouging experience as she shows off her vivacious body that would make the end of the world nothing compared to having one steamy night with this gorgeous piece of human artistry.

Growing up in Las Vegas made it easy for Brittney to be part of the exciting PLAYBOY world. As they say, what happens in Vegas may not necessarily stay in Vegas. After all, Palmer has been to places and everywhere she goes gives her a totally different experience that is always a thrill in her life – literally. And it begins with the story how a Vegas showgirl ended up in one of the most vicious and bloody fighting rings.

"I had a high school sweetheart," she remembers, "His mother was so into the UFC she would throw pillows at the TV set. When I was 18, I worked out front at UFC event, handing out free beer. And now I'm actually in the Octagon, which is crazy."

After her high school graduation, she worked as a magician's assistant and danced in a burlesque show at the Flamingo Hotel. And just like a true artist, she always made sure that no matter what happens, the show must always go on even if the magic of the moment leads her to one disappearing act after another to capture the imagination of those who fancy even just one magical moment with her simply because she knows that the dance will start at exactly 10 with or without her clothes on to regal you for at least an hour.

But like a poet whose inspiration comes from the musings of a solitary wanderer, she experienced illumination by the poetry of her body. And when not experiencing that gripping moment of enlightenment, she would just party until the sun comes up and do it over and over again like endless nights of awesome delights.

"You'd get off at 11, go out for drinks, party till the sun came up and then do it again." But as time went on, Brittney longed for thrills that didn't involve buying shots for everyone in the bar. "I'd wake up the next day and think, Really, Brittney? You just spent $500 on shots for people you'll never talk to again?"

To get out from the banality of her everyday life and get a breath of fresh air, she leaves everything behind to snowboard in the Alps or paddleboard in Hawaii. She used to go off-trail backpacking with friends in Colorado—which was lots of fun until they woke to discover bears had invaded their camp.

"One friend climbed a tree," Brittney said. "I just hid in my tent." She plans to go surfing in Indonesia but said that if she does, she'll probably never come back.

A globe-trotting dynamo at the age of 24, Brittney began a new phase in her life by having Shakespearean poetic lines tattooed on her back. "But thou contracted to thine own bright eyes" and "Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self cruel" are Shakespearean lines that now decorate her subtle skin. Like a sonnet that captures the emotion reminding her that narcissism is a form of cruelty, Brittney embarked into another mind-grappling adventure: this time she transforms the words into images of the most intricate design – paintings of classic rock album covers and musicians ranging from Led Zeppelin to Sammy Hagar. Brittney recently enrolled in the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) art school and has started her own painting business through her websites showcasing her acrylic renderings of images definitive of her personality. Imagine the transformation to a showgirl to an iconic image who may one day be labeled a Picasso of her time while being in the cover page of a PLAYBOY magazine.

So, Brittney is no longer just this Vegas showgirl imagined by the millions around the world whenever they view the violent UFC fights. She is now a "Youtube-trained" painter who managed to build enough of a portfolio to get into UCLA. "I've been learning about compositions and colors and negative space," she said. "I take figure drawing classes all day, every day. Ninety-nine percent of the time there's a nude model in your class—it's beautiful, and it's art. I'm really good at drawing nudes. I think women's bodies are fantastic, and I work my ass off for my body. I have such appreciation for being in PLAYBOY—it's like being a model for an elite figure-drawing class." Who knew school could be so much fun?

Brittney is definitely more than what "meat(s)" the eye. So, next time you see a round girl trot her ass on a ring, believe that she, too, is a work of art and the ring that artistic canvas you can always dream about and consider a masterpiece.

AN AFTERNOON WITH MANONG

FRANCISCO SIONIL JOSE

WRITTEN BY NIKKI GARDE-TORRES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RAYMOND SALDANA

THE FIRST THING F. SIONIL JOSE SAID WHEN THE INTERVIEW BEGAN WAS SHORT AND SIMPLE: *"I EXPECT INTELLIGENT QUESTIONS."*

NATIONAL ARTIST FOR LITERATURE FRANCISCO SIONIL JOSE IS WELL KNOWN AS A FICTIONIST, ESSAYIST AND JOURNALIST. HIS ROSALES FAMILY SAGA, A SERIES OF NOVELS *(PO-ON, TREE, MY BROTHER, MY EXECUTIONER, THE PRETENDERS, MASS)* CROSSED GENRES WHEN THREE OF THEM WENT FROM PAGE TO STAGE IN A SERIES OF PRODUCTIONS BY THE PHILIPPINE EDUCATIONAL THEATER ASSOCIATION (PETA) AND TANGHALANG PILIPINO. HE HAS ALSO WRITTEN OTHER NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES WHILE WRITING A REGULAR COLUMN IN THE PHILIPPINE STAR.

But there are other facets to the man. He is also a teacher; a businessman who put up the Solidarity Magazine and the Solidaridad Book Shop which has become a landmark in busy Manila; a cultural worker who founded the Philippine chapter of P.E.N. (Poets, Playwrights, Essayists and Novelists) International. He is a loving husband, a father of seven, a grandfather and a great grandfather.

An educator, Jose has taught at the Arellano University, the University of the East, De La Salle University, the University of Santo Tomas and the University of California in Berkeley. Although he dropped out of the UST before gaining his undergraduate degree, he has nevertheless been conferred with honorary doctorates by the University of the Philippines, De La Salle University, and Far Eastern University.

For his achievements he was awarded the title *National Artist for Literature* in 2001— the highest award the Philippine government bestows on artists – and has been recognized both here and abroad with other awards, namely the *Pablo Neruda Centennial Award* (Chile, 2004);*The Order of Sacred Treasure, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon* (Japan, 2001); *the Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres* (France, 2000); *Cultural Center of the Philippines Centennial Award* (1999); *Cultural Center of the Philippines Award* (Gawad para sa Sining) *for Literature* (1989); *First Prize, Palanca Memorial Award for Novel in English*(1981); *Ramon Magsaysay Award for Journalism, Literature and Creative Communication Arts* (1980).

At the ripe old age of 88, Jose continues writing. His knowledge of current events would put a professional journalist to shame. He and his wife Tessie still run the bookshop and in fact, *"I choose every book that we sell here."*

The interview was done at the second floor of Jose's bookshop – a venue which in itself has attained significance for many of the Philippines' intelligentsia. In that room, equipped only with two tables and comfortable chairs, many of the countries' best and brightest have met – for wine, good food and the pleasure of scintillating conversation. It also the monthly meeting place of the Philippine P.E.N.

Off the room, in a separate compartment was the den of Mr. Jose, the room where to this date, he continues to create great literary works. His office is filled with the memorabilia of a life in the arts. On his desk are newspapers, manuscripts and various documents. Under the glass cover of the desk are photographs of his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Behind him is a bookshelf filled with his favorite works as well as copies of his books in each of the 27 languages in which they have been translated. An upside-down Philippine Flag is stuck to the wall. A few inches away from the flag is a penis guard from Papua New Guinea. Below the flag is the electric typewriter he still uses.

Steph Raquel, PLAYBOY's managing editor, who was with this writer during the interview couldn't resist asking when she saw the upside-down flag. : *How can you not be angry if you are Filipino?*, Jose answered, *We are talking about all of these tragedies. Pero manhid ang mga tao (People are numb). The flag by my desk is upside-down because I am enraged. Writers have to have rage and passion.*

Throughout the conversation, it was evident that Mr. Jose is a man who has spent a lifetime expressing his passion through his writings. He is a man of strong opinion. A nationalist to the core, he continues to work hard to achieve a true social revolution even if, to quote him: *I don't see the revolution fulfilled in my lifetime.*

The interview starts off with an interesting anecdote of his experience with the original PLAYBOY Magazine in the U.S. in the 1960s.

F. Sionil Jose (FSJ): *I knew the fiction editor of PLAYBOY (The fiction editor at that time was Robie Macauley - NGT) because he was in the Philippines during World War II. He asked me to write for them….but I was so busy. But it was, I think US$10,000.00 per story. He introduced me to Hugh Hefner. He brought me to the head office in Chicago. They had many good writers for PLAYBOY. And their interviews were very good. We used to sell the compilation of PLAYBOY interviews here in the bookshop but we only had two copies and they are gone now. Those interviews took several sittings, unlike this one.*

On how he would define himself

Nikki Garde-Torres (NGT): Who is F. Sionil Jose?

FSJ: *I am a writer. Of course I am an artist. I am a Filipino writer. Before I started putting out books, I started talking to my American editor. I told him, I am going to entrust my manuscripts to you. Just don't make me less Filipino. Like all writers, I am not humble at all. I'm as conceited as they come.*

On becoming a writer

NGT : Can you tell us a bit about your background.

FSJ : *I was born in Rosales, Pangasinan. My childhood was spent in Barrio Cabugawan, Rosales. My family was quite poor. Only two of us were able to escape from the poverty of the barrio.*

NGT : Who was your sensei? Your first teacher?

STEPH RAQUEL, PLAYBOY'S MANAGING EDITOR, WHO WAS WITH THIS WRITER DURING THE INTERVIEW COULDN'T RESIST ASKING WHEN SHE SAW THE UPSIDE-DOWN FLAG.

"HOW CAN YOU NOT BE ANGRY IF YOU ARE FILIPINO?*, JOSE ANSWERED, *WE ARE TALKING ABOUT ALL OF THESE TRAGEDIES. PERO MANHID ANG MGA TAO (PEOPLE ARE NUMB). THE FLAG BY MY DESK IS UPSIDE-DOWN BECAUSE I AM ENRAGED. WRITERS HAVE TO HAVE RAGE AND PASSION."

United Nations Foundation Prize Gold Medal for Humanitarian and Development Reporting
("Inside Haiti: Hatred and Hunger in an Unhealed Land," Imelda Abaño)

- **ROTARY CLUB OF MANILA**
  - »Newspaper of the Year
- **ASEAN CHAMPIONS OF BIODIVERSITY**
  - »Third Place (Media Category)
- **HOLCIM JOURNALISM AWARDS FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION**
  - »Story of the Year (Anjo Alimario)
  - »Special Citation for People and Community (Imelda Abaño)
  - »Special Citation for Environment (Max de Leon)
  - »Finalist (Roderick Abad)
- **ECONOMIC JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES**
  - »Best Agriculture Reporter (Jennifer Ng)
  - »Best Feature Story (Lenie Lectura)
- **DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FUR INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT**
  - »Best Photo Essay (Nonie Reyes)
- **SSS BALIKAT NG BAYAN EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM AWARDS**
  - »Best in Print Category (Butch del Castillo)
- **JOSE G. BURGOS JR. AWARDS FOR BIOTECH JOURNALISM**
  - »First Place, Institutional Category
  - »First Place, News Category (Lyn Resurreccion)
  - »Third Place, News Category (Jonathan Mayuga)
  - »Third Place, Features Category z(Jennifer Ng)
- **BRIGHTLEAF AGRICULTURE AWARDS**
  - »Agriculture Story of the Year (Alberto "Bong" Fabe)
  - »Best Regional Agriculture News Story (Marilou Guieb)
  - »Tobacco Photo of the Year (Mauricio Victa)
- **HENRY FORD AWARDS**
  - »Hall of Fame, Best Motoring Section
  - »Best Automotive Feature Story (Tet Andolong)

BusinessMirror. *The No. 1 daily business newspaper in the Philippines*

FSJ : *My mother was my first teacher. She was a tiny peasant woman. She finished Grade 7 under the Thomasites. When I was in Grade 5, she saw I liked reading. She borrowed books for me from people she knew. She borrowed the Noli, the Fili and Willa Cather's My Antonia for me. So at a very young age, I had already read both of Rizal's novels. She was a great believer in education.*

On his political inclinations

NGT : You are very well known for being outspoken about everything from art to politics. Depending on whom I speak with, you have once been accused of being a spy for the CIA or a leftist. Where do you stand in the political spectrum? Or rather, can you actually be labelled?

FSJ : *The origin of the CIA story is like this: In the 1960s, when I set up this bookshop I got a grant from the Congress for Cultural Freedom which was based in Paris for my publication Solidarity. They published in France, Germany, Australia, India, Mexico….In the late 60s and early 70s, it was found out that the Congress was partially funded by the CIA. And since Solidarity was funded by the Congress, people assumed that I was CIA.*

NGT : And being a leftist?

FSJ : *In the postwar period, we were all kaliwete (leftists). We were influenced by the leftist writing in America. Writers are always for the underdog. We were anti-Establishment. In 1960, I went to the Basque region of Spain to write. I was alone. I was thinking. I had read Marx in college. I decided to embrace the righteousness and inevitability of the Filipino*

I KNEW THE FICTION EDITOR OF PLAYBOY (THE FICTION EDITOR AT THAT TIME WAS ROBIE MACAULEY - NGT) BECAUSE HE WAS IN THE PHILIPPINES DURING WORLD WAR II. HE ASKED ME TO WRITE FOR THEM....BUT I WAS SO BUSY. BUT IT WAS, I THINK US$10,000.00 PER STORY. HE INTRODUCED ME TO HUGH HEFNER. HE BROUGHT ME TO THE HEAD OFFICE IN CHICAGO. THEY HAD MANY GOOD WRITERS FOR PLAYBOY. AND THEIR INTERVIEWS WERE VERY GOOD. WE USED TO SELL THE COMPILATION OF PLAYBOY INTERVIEWS HERE IN THE BOOKSHOP BUT WE ONLY HAD TWO COPIES AND THEY ARE GONE NOW. THOSE INTERVIEWS TOOK SEVERAL SITTINGS, UNLIKE THIS ONE.

"THE LAWS ON OBSCENITY SHOULD ALL BE SCRAPPED. WE SHOULD HAVE ADULT MOVIE HOUSES AND SEX SHOPS. IN DENMARK AND JAPAN WHERE THEY HAVE THEM, NO ONE GOES THERE. THEY'RE ALWAYS EMPTY. BECAUSE THERE IS NO MYSTERY. SO WHY BE DECOROUS ABOUT IT? SEX IS A NATURAL NEED. "

Nationalist revolution. Marx never said that revolution had to be violent. It was a conscious choice. But I don't see the revolution fulfilled in my lifetime.

On nationalism and the failure of our leadership

FSJ : *Nationalism is a political ideology. Our loyalties/gratitude should be for our biological mother forever, because she gave us the most precious gift of life. It is the same thing with our Motherland. It sustains, makes you who you are, you will die for it. The most important determinant is the will, the courage of the leadership. This is what writers must talk about. Many Filipinos do not realize the harm the Marcoses inflicted on our country. Criminals messed up EDSA. Cory was archaic. She changed the EDSA revolution into a restoration. Ninoy would not have done that. He (Ninoy) spoke of his plans right here at the bookshop.*

On censorship and sex

NGT : Among the never ever resolved issues in the arts is that of censorship. Do you feel that censorship is necessary?

FSJ : *I would censor stuff because it is not art. Some new composers – they cannot distinguish music from noise. But perhaps I am conservative. During the Marcos years, it was easy to avoid censorship You just read the rules. There is no such thing as obscenity in art or literature. Ancient literature, like the Greeks, were very graphic. Like in their sculpture...it is all there. What is obscene are those goddamn politicians who are crooks*

NGT : How about present censorship laws?

FSJ : *The laws on obscenity should all be scrapped. We should have adult movie houses and sex shops. In Denmark and Japan where they have them, no one goes there. They're always empty. Because there is no mystery. So why be decorous about it? Sex is a natural need.*

On craftsmanship and inspiration

NGT : There are very few schools for the arts. How can students learn?

FSJ : *I will answer that by telling you this story. My son went to Japan to study the techniques of restoring paintings. He, at first, felt very discouraged because his sensei or teacher gave him menial tasks to do. He wanted to give up and go home. But I told him to stick with it. He must learn his craft. And he did learn. Later, when another student had to re-do his work because of one little wrinkle on the canvas, my son told me that he finally understood the need to start at the bottom, to learn the techniques in order that excellent work might be achieved.*

In writing, you still have to be a craftsman. Look at my manuscripts. I slave over every word. What I appreciate about many of our artists is that there are many committed people. They should watch more (plays, movies, concerts). Some workshops would help. Craftsmanship muna (Craftsmanship first).

Our tradition in the arts is really Western. We can get out of that mold by using our folk material as inspiration for our works. Look at Agnes Locsin (dance choreographer). But, above all else, we need a strong critical tradition.

NGT : Do you think it is also important to study history?

FSJ : *We have no sense of history. There is no sense of the past. How did Japan and Korea develop so fast? Because of their sense of history and culture.*

On reading in the Age of the Internet

NGT : Do you still read the newspaper daily?

FSJ : *I still read newspapers everyday – the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Philippines Star, BusinessWorld and now the Manila Bulletin which is improving. The International Herald Tribune, New York Times has the best book reviews and the Economist because we sell it. I always want to be up to date on things.*

The sad thing is, nobody reads today. It's like shouting to the wind. If they read at all, they draw half-baked conclusions. But I don't believe books should be forced upon students.

On poverty

NGT : The issues we have nowadays are all blamed on one thing: poverty. What do you think about this?

FSJ : *Poverty is a moral issue. It is always a moral issue. All the churches have failed. To my mind, they have failed to imbue their followers with moral values and civic values. Even programs for birth control – the value is over poverty. What is disgusting are these charlatans. As Karl Marx said, religion is the opium of the masses.*

There are so many things that conspire to make people poor. The poor are poor because they are poor. They are happy to be poor. How do you change this attitude? Through education.

This is where, when you look at it carefully, the US is the enemy of the World. The US model of untrammelled greed is followed everywhere. It results in the destruction of the world's natural resources. The US consumes 50% if all our natural resources. Look at China. When China had a population of only one and half billion, they had a famine almost every year. Today, 97% of the Chinese people are no longer hungry. There is equitable distribution of wealth and income. There are jobs. That is indeed a Great Leap!

But things change. My idea for land reform in the 50s is no longer valid. There is no more land to distribute. We should make all the arable lands more productive. Values should be replaced with something just as valuable.

On relating with the young writers today

NGT : In your dinners here with young writers, is it a conscious choice for you to teach?

FSJ : *I am consciously reaching out to them (the young people). I would like to meet young writers. All writers are sensei's. The first writers were teachers. I want young people to always recognize their roots and nurture it. Young people have no social direction. It is important for writers to be contextual.*

We should start them young. Wala pang radio and TV (no radio and TV). I have a lot of faith in tradition. There is a lot of art and literature there. Continuity is important. Remember folk tradition and replace them with the new means of communication.

Colonialism has been, embedded. There are writers who come from the US with their thesis…and force it on us. They should look for more models that are relevant to us.

NGT : Are you still writing? Is there anything you are working on right now?

FSJ : *Of course I am still writing! You know, as I said, one of the first novels I read was Willa Cather's My Antonia. I am now writing a tribute to Willa Cather. A novel about a young woman called Esperanza. And that is all I will tell you.*

"I AM CONSCIOUSLY REACHING OUT TO THEM (THE YOUNG PEOPLE). I WOULD LIKE TO MEET YOUNG WRITERS. ALL WRITERS ARE SENSEI'S. THE FIRST WRITERS WERE TEACHERS. I WANT YOUNG PEOPLE TO ALWAYS RECOGNIZE THEIR ROOTS AND NURTURE IT. YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE NO SOCIAL DIRECTION. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR WRITERS TO BE CONTEXTUAL."

LOOKING AHEAD>>

1. PHILIPPINE NEWS IT'S BEEN FUN IN THE PHILIPPINES, WITH TOURISM ON THE RISE IN 2012. HOW FUN WILL 2013 BE FOR FOREIGN AND LOCAL TOURISTS IN THE PHILIPPINES? AND, FOLLOWING THE CREATION OF THE BANGSAMORO REGION LAST OCTOBER, 2012, WILL THIS BE THE BEGINNING OF PEACE IN MINDANAO, MAKING THE REGION OPEN FOR ECONOMIC AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT?

2. WORLD NEWS AS BARACK OBAMA BEGINS HIS SECOND TERM AS PRESIDENT, ONE OF HIS MAIN GOALS IS TO BRING BACK OUTSOURCED JOBS TO THE US. THE BPO INDUSTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES HAS BEEN A HUGE FACTOR IN PROVIDING COMPETITIVE-PAYING JOBS FOR MOST FILIPINOS. WILL OBAMA'S PLAN MEAN A SIGNIFICANT DECLINE ON JOBS GENERATED BY BPO'S?

3. POLITICS THE LOCAL ELECTIONS ARE COMING UP IN MAY WITH FILIPINOS SET TO CHOOSE A NEW SET OF SENATORS WHO WILL LEAD THE COUNTRY. WILL THE FAMILIAR CELEBRITIES MAKE IT TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND NATIONAL SEATS? WILL POLITICAL DYNASTIES PROSPER? OR WILL THE VOTERS SEE LIGHT IN NEW BLOOD AND GIVE THE COUNTRY A CHANCE FOR GENUINE CHANGE? WILL WE FINALLY HEAR ABOUT LAWS MADE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE, OR ARE WE GOING TO SEE MORE BLACK PROFILE PICTURES ON SOCIAL NETWORKS AS A SIGN OF THE PEOPLE'S DISAPPROVAL?

4. ECONOMY THE PHILIPPINE PESO IS ON THE RISE AND EXPERTS BELIEVE THAT THIS YEAR IS NOT A FLUKE, BUT RATHER A SIGN OF THINGS TO COME. INVESTORS ARE COMING IN, AND THE ECONOMY IS GOING STRONGER. ARE THE EXPERTS GOING TO BE PROVEN WRONG OR ARE WE INDEED ON THE RIGHT TRACK TO BECOMING THE NEXT TIGER ECONOMY?

5. SPORTS LOCAL SPORTS HAVE EXPERIENCED A RECENT RESURGENCE WITH THE AZKALS, GILAS PILIPINAS, AND PHILIPPINE VOLCANOES RAISING THE COUNTRY'S RANKINGS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPORTS. WILL THEY CONTINUE TO ENJOY SUCCESS AND CEMENT OUR PLACE AS ONE OF THE TEAMS TO BEAT IN ASIA? AFTER THE PACQUIAO LOSS, WHO WILL NOT BE THE FILIPINO CHAMPION FOR THE MASSES?

6. ENVIRONMENT THE JAPAN TSUNAMI, THE PHILIPPINE QUAKES AND TYPHOONS, AND HURRICANE SANDY IN THE US MADE HUGE HEADLINES OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS BECAUSE OF THE DEVASTATION IT LEFT BEHIND. WILL THESE TRIGGER MORE SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS ABOUT GLOBAL WARMING AND PREPAREDNESS ON NATURAL CALAMITIES? SHOULD AL GORE PRACTICE HIS BEST "I TOLD YOU SO" FACE?

7. MOVIES SUPERHERO MOVIES (THOR, SUPERMAN, IRON MAN); ANIMATION (DESPICABLE ME, ICE AGE, MONSTERS UNIVERSITY); FANTASY (THE HOBBIT, HUNGER GAMES, STAR TREK, PLANET OF THE APES, PERCY JACKSON); AND, ACTION (DIE HARD, G.I.JOE, FAST 6) ARE SOME OF THE GENRES WITH MOVIES WORTH LOOKING FORWARD TO. HAVE YOU TICKED YOUR CALENDAR WITH THE DATE OF YOUR MOST ANTICIPATED MOVIE IN 2013?

8. ENTERTAINMENT "BWAKAW" STARRING AWARD-WINNING ACTOR EDDIE GARCIA IS THE PHILIPPINES' OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE OSCARS FOR BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM. WILL LOCAL CINEMA FINALLY FIND INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS THROUGH THIS MOVIE? AS THE MOVIE IS ABOUT A GAY GUY WHO CAME OUT OF THE CLOSET IN THE LATER YEARS OF HIS LIFE, COULD IT INSPIRE SOME PROMINENTLY RUMORED LOCAL PUBLIC FIGURES TO COME OUT OF THE CLOSET NEXT YEAR?

9. MUSIC 2012 SAW SOME BIG CONCERTS IN THE COUNTRY. WITH A NEW VENUE BEING OPENED IN THE MALL OF ASIA ARENA, THE LOCAL CONCERT SCENE CAN ONLY GET BIGGER. A HUGE K-POP CONCERT IS SET IN JANUARY AND THE SCRIPT IS SET ON MARCH. WHO ARE THOSE WHO YOU WISH WOULD PERFORM A CONCERT IN 2013?

10. INTERNET CHARICE STARTED OFF HER CAREER AS A YOUTUBE SENSATION. PSY AND THAT GANGNAM STYLE SONG IS HEARD AND DANCED JUST ABOUT EVERYWHERE BECAUSE IT MADE THE ROUNDS ON SOCIAL NETWORKS. WHO WILL BE 2013'S NEW VIRAL INTERNET STAR?

11. TECHNOLOGY WINDOWS THREW ITS NAME IN THE HAT WHEN IT COMES TO PICKING YOUR SMARTPHONE'S OPERATING SYSTEM IN 2012, CHALLENGING THE POPULAR APPLE OS AND ANDROID. WILL WINDOWS MAKE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE SMARTPHONE WARS? WILL OTHER OPERATING SYSTEMS LIKE SYMBIAN TRY THEIR LUCK AND JOIN IN?

A LOOK AT 2013

THE MAYAN CALENDAR said the world was supposed to end in 2012. We all know it never occured. Still, there are events that are set to happen this year, some may be set in stone, some we may only speculate if it could actually happen. While we can't predict the future, no one can stop us from wondering what might take place. Here's a look at 2013 and the questions that may be answered only when we get there.

BY VOLTAIRE LOZADA / ILLUSTRATION BY OWEN REYES

the Women of the World

PLAYBOY PLAYMATES IN ONE 'GLOBAL, MAGNETIC, RARE' GALA

Ask any red-blooded adult male (or female!) what a "Playmate" is and chances are the first thing that would come to their mind is the image of a woman posing provocatively and seemingly enticing them to do all sorts of sexy things. They are, of course, thinking of that iconic image of female desirability made popular and well-loved by global publishing giant, PLAYBOY. A Playmate, they would most likely say, is the embodiment of every guy's fantasy girl and of every girl's fantasy form. She is the type of girl that gets their blood racing and their libidos shooting up. Hers is the beauty that is both open and unattainable.

"I think every girl wants to secretly be a Playmate because every girl wants to be the stuff that men's dreams are made of," said our very own Playmate Sky Aisuru.

But that's not to say that Playmates don't know how to let loose. In fact, they happen to be a very lively and vibrant group of girls. "We're a fun-loving bunch," exclaimed Playmate Kandra Van Der Bank of South Africa. "That's one of the things, I think, that make us standout. It's true that girls just want to have fun but Playmates just do it better," she added with a wink and a smile.

How very fitting, then, that for two weeks last year, the Philippines, currently being touted as the 'fun capital of the world', played host to Playmate Kandra along with 10 other international Playmate beauties in a historical gala that showcased the personification of a PLAYBOY Woman.

While in the country, the ladies, dubbed Playmates of the World, joined local Playmate Sky to uphold the 'new standards of beauty' set by PLAYBOY by doing a mall tour and a fashion show. Set in Manila's latest hotspot, *Republiq*, the ladies sashayed down the runway clad in sexy couture and showed the crowd what sets Playmates apart and still relevant to pop culture the world over. "The fashion show was a lot fun to do because it felt a lot like we were doing Miss Universe but without all the pressure of competition," said Playmate Katherine Bautista of Venezuela. Of the near-mythical status enjoyed by Playmates, Netherland's Playmate Zimra said, "Being a Playmate is really special because even after

WRITTEN BY LAUREN ACURANTES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RAYMOND SALDANA
HAIR AND MAKE-UP BY EMMAN CONCEPCION
STYLED BY VINCE FLORES AND JASON ALCORIZA

all these years, we're still considered to be cool, classy, and sophisticated."

The global appeal of the Playmate persona goes above and beyond the breathtaking pictures and the alluring poses; it represents the idea of being a woman of the world. "The PLAYBOY Woman is global, magnetic, rare. She is the woman of every race who represents the multicultural face of global style. She sets the bar for beauty and continues to write the definitive rules of attraction," goes the credo set forth by PLAYBOY Headquarters in California.

"To me, PLAYBOY has always been about women's empowerment regardless of the color of their skin or their size, and I am proud to be a part of this gala since this shows that PLAYBOY has always been about the celebration of being a woman," said Playmate Katarzyna Danysz of Poland. For Playmate Katarina Sarkova from Slovakia, empowerment equals self-confidence. "Sometimes we tend to be critical of ourselves; always finding faults and focusing on the negatives. But when we are empowered, we have more self-confidence. And with more self-confidence, we become more positive," she remarked.

And self-confidence and positivity happen to be traits that this issue's Playmates have in spades. Most of them happen to be professional models and TV personalities in their respective countries. Some have dabbled in film acting and in broadcast journalism. Their interests range from food to fashion to psychology to philosophical questions about life. "I was very happy to get to meet all the other girls. It was very interesting for me to learn more about their culture, their interests, and it was nice to know that even though we come from different parts of the world, we still have a lot of things in common," gushed Serbian Playmate Anastasija Budjic.

As for two special Playmates, it was the language barrier that brought them closer together."My English is not so good," admitted Playmate Mateja Gaspar of Croatia. "But I have a friendly personality and I'm a positive person so I am able to communicate using that." Just like Playmate Mateja, Latvia's Playmate Lingita Bopulu shared the same anxiety but credits her interest in American music as a big factor in helping her learn English as well as her keen interest in foreign languages. "I have a very strong interest in languages and hope to someday earn a PhD in linguistics," she said.

As Playmates Mateja and Lingita have shown, even Playmates have regular problems like regular girls. The secret, they say, is in identifying what it is that makes you feel insecure and seeking ways to help yourself be better. "For this year, I want to overcome my meekness until I'm possibly 100% at ease with myself," said Playmate Clivia Treidl of Germany. Playmate Irina Georgescu from Romania also aspired to hone her craft to become a better person. "I want to get better in my work as a professional model and I want to help others as well in becoming better people"

Undoubtedly, their visit to the Philippines cemented Playmates' reputation as well-rounded women who have varied interests and who have the social charm and magnetism to attract even the most stubborn of men and to soften even the most critical of women. Still, a Playmate represents something unique to each and every one of us and as they grace our cover all together for the very first time, we invite you to come up with your own definition of what a Playmate is and to look beyond the photos and see the girls for what they represent: Freedom, Fearlessness, and Fierceness.

ANASTASIJA BUDIC | SERBIA

MATEJA GASPAR | CROATIA

KATARINA SARKOVA | SLOVAKIA

KASIA DANYZ| POLAND

IRINA GEORGESCU | ROMANIA

OLIVIA TRIEDL | GERMANY

LINGITA LINA BOPULU | LATVIA

KANDRA VAN DER BANK | SOUTH AFRICA

SKY AISURU | PHILIPPINES

KATHERINE BAUTISTA | VENEZUELA

ZIMRA GEURTS | NETHERLANDS

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NORTH KOREA'S BORDER IS THE MOST DIFFICULT TO PENETRATE WE FIGURED OUT HOW: ENTER THE NORTH KOREAN AMATEUR

"You da mandarin!"

The Brits were cheering the second secretary. A trim, bespectacled diplomat in electric-blue golf togs, the second -secretary—Mongolia's deputy ambassador to North Korea—laced his drive around a dogleg toward a herd of scrawny goats. He pumped his fist while the Brits, Alex and Simon, hailed him with sprays of Korean lager and shouts of "You da mandarin" and "You da Manchurian," until somebody said that mandarins and Manchurians are Chinese, not Mongolian.

The beery Brits took that in. "Very well then," Alex said. "You da Mongolian!"

The second secretary bowed. "Crazy boys, I love your ass," he said. Or words to that effect—I was distracted by the beauty-pageant winner who was buffing my balls. She was my caddie, Sun-Yi. We were next up in the 2012 Democratic People's Republic of Korea Amateur Golf Open, the biggest golfing event in the unfree world, and I needed my A game. To catch the leaders I'd have to make a run at late dictator Kim Jong Il's course record of 11 holes in one.

Fifteen golfers had come to North Korea: from Hong Kong and Dongguan in China, from Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia, from Australia, New Zealand, England, Finland and the United States. Some flew to Beijing and rode an overnight train that creaked through 100 miles of desolate North Korean countryside where the electricity might work for an hour a day. I caught a 15-hour flight from JFK in New York to Seoul, South Korea, followed by a two-hour flight to Shenyang, China and then a short flight on state-owned Air Koryo to the North Korean capital, Pyongyang. It would have been simpler to fly the 120 miles from Seoul to Pyongyang, but commercial airlines detour around North Korean airspace to avoid getting shot down.

As the world's last Stalinist dictatorship, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a relic of the Cold War. After World War II freed Korea from Japanese occupation, Russia took over the northern half of the country, while the U.S. ran the southern half. Today prosperous, golf-crazy South Korea buzzes with commerce, Russia and China embrace their own forms of moneygrubbing, and even Cuba chases tourist dollars. But the DPRK

THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS 18 HOLES

BY KEVIN COOK

IN THE WORLD. EVEN THE CIA HAS TROUBLE CROSSING IT. GOLF TOURNAMENT. IT'S TEE TIME INSIDE THE AXIS OF EVIL

sticks to grim, stone-faced totalitarianism. Only a handful of Westerners are allowed in each year. The regime views them—us—as likely spies, and while getting into the country was easy, there were no guarantees about getting out. An American soldier who defected to North Korea in 1962 tried to leave in 1966. Forty-six years later he's still in Pyongyang.

As suspected spies we surrendered our cell phones to a soldier at the airport. We were assigned a tour guide who confiscated our passports and a minder whose job was to keep an eye on us. There would be no Wi-Fi during our visit to Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un's locked-down land, no internet and not much TV except for state-approved channels that played military music. One golfer who glimpsed a shot of Barack and Michelle Obama holding hands on TV called it North Korean porn.

It wasn't the best week to arrive. Cash-strapped North Korea had recently launched a satellite that experts compared to a dishwasher wrapped in duct tape. It fell apart in flight—a global embarrassment. Aerial photos revealed that the regime had resumed building a nuclear reactor—a global provocation. The day I arrived, a U.S. general admitted to parachuting real spies into North Korea. The Pyongyang Times railed against imperialist America, calling the U.S. "a criminal state" and "the ringleader of man-killing." A Frommer's travel guide I left in a Shenyang trash can placed North Korea atop its list of dangerous nations. Under "Places to Avoid," it read, "the entire country."

But tour planner Dylan Harris, a shaggy-haired Englishman who runs a firm called Lupine Travel, swore I'd be safe behind the Bamboo Curtain. After almost a decade of dealing with North Korea's secretive government, he knew which palms to grease. The regime was as hungry for hard currency as its people were for rice. Fifteen hundred capitalist dollars per golfer and we were in.

So damn the satellites. Let's launch some Pro-Vs!

On day one of our invasion of the Democratic People's Republic, a dozen pasty golfers gathered on the communist side of the DMZ between North Korea and South Korea, the most dangerous border on earth. More than 500 soldiers have died in various skirmishes at the DMZ, a two-mile-wide stretch of barbed and electrified fences, observation towers and minefields. In 1976 a North Korean lieutenant attacked American soldiers trimming a poplar in the DMZ, plunging a hatchet into a U.S. captain's neck. (In North Korea's account, border guards "confronted U.S. troops, daringly catching a flying ax thrown by the enemy.") Two Americans died.

Our minders led a friendlier tour of the International Friendship Exhibition at Mount Myohyang, where 90,000 gifts attest to the world's affection for North Korean founding father Kim Il Sung, his late son (the golfing commandant) Kim Jong Il and his son, 28-year-old Kim Jong Un, who became the planet's youngest head of state when he took over last year. The gift museum held a bulletproof limousine—a present from Joseph Stalin to Kim Il Sung—as well as a railway car from Mao Tse-tung, an East German tank, a bear's head from Romanian tyrant Nicolae Ceaus¸escu and, from the Sandin-istas of Nicaragua, a stuffed crocodile standing on its hind legs, holding a tray of drinks. America gave a basketball signed by Michael Jordan. The ball led our minder, Mr. Liu [some names have been changed], to ask where we were from.

"America," admitted Josh, the wiseass in the bunch, a sweet-swinging six-handicapper working undercover for Golf Magazine. "Land of Michael Jordan."

Mr. Liu said, "Down with America!" Which made everyone a little uneasy until he cracked up.

Exhausted, we finally landed at our hotel. A 47-floor tower on an island in the Taedong River, the Yanggakdo International Hotel is the tallest habitable building in North Korea. I say "habitable" because the Yanggakdo is dwarfed by another nearby building, the empty Ryugyong Hotel. Looming over Pyongyang like a 1,000-foot alien rocket, the 105-story Ryugyong was meant to be the nation's showplace, the tallest hotel in the world. But Russian financing fell through. Twenty-five years after construction began, the Ryugyong stands deserted. It appears on no maps. It's bad form to mention its name. Until recently the regime denied its existence even as the so-called Hotel of Doom cast a mile-long shadow over the capital city.

"Can't see a thing," Simon said, staring right at it. "Anyway, our crib's superior."

He was right. Aside from its arm-biting elevators, the Yanggakdo tops most Hiltons. We spent our euros, the preferred imperialist currency, in a subterranean floor featuring a bar, swimming pool, casino, barbershop, massage therapist, billiard and Ping-Pong tables and a three-lane bowling alley. The rest of the hotel was mostly off-limits, with Westerners restricted to a few VIP floors where the rooms were said to be bugged. We were especially not allowed on the fifth floor, which was said to be the spies' floor, where eavesdroppers listen in on the VIP floors above.

Mr. Liu and his colleague Miss Song monitored our movements. The gifts we presented them—cartons of Marlboros for him, chocolates for her—made them rich compared with most North Koreans. Mr. Liu told me I was free to jog up and down the river island but not to cross the bridge that led to the rest of Pyongyang. "Soldiers will stop you," he said. In 2008, when a South Korean woman wandered away from her tour group, a North Korean sentry shot her in the head.

We looked bloody conspicuous in our Titleist and TaylorMade caps, taking practice swings outside our hotel the night before the second annual DPRK Amateur Golf Open. Later, toasting our grim-faced hosts over beers, grayish vodka and several more beers, Josh filled us in on North Korea's golf history. It consists mainly of one tall tale: In 1994, dictator Kim Jong Il teed up at the course we would play the next morning. It was his first round of golf, witnessed by 17 armed guards and members of the regime's media office. And according to every last witness, the so-called Dear Leader made a hole in one that day. And then he made 10 more. He finished 38 under par for 18 holes, with 11 aces—the best round in golf history. The dictator's score was more than 20 strokes better than any other round anybody ever shot.

Lying in bed that night, I couldn't help thinking that a golf tournament was a -pretty stupid reason to fly halfway around the world to a place you might never escape. The only stupider thing would be to fly halfway around the world to a golf tournament and lose.

I had come to win.

ABOVE : THE WRITER WITH HIS CADDIE, SUN-YI. BELOW: A SNAPSHOT WITH "GOLF BROTHER" CHULUUN MUNKHBAT, A MONGOLIAN LAWYER WITH A KILLER SHORT GAME.

On day one of the open we breakfasted on fried eggs, strong coffee and kimchi, the national pickled-cabbage dish, then piled into a tour bus for the drive to the most exclusive golf course in North Korea. Because it's the only golf course in North Korea.

We doped out the tournament on the way. Wisecracking Josh, the Golf Magazine mole, was

the foremost golfer in a field full of whack-a-mole hacks. Then there was Antti from Finland, a lanky blond engineer with 300-yard power. He might be a threat. The same went for bearded, beery Simon from London. His mate Alex, a garrulous journo from one of Rupert Murdoch's tabloids, swung like he was fending off subpoenas, but Simon could flip a flop shot like Phil Mickelson. His 36 handicap was fishier than sushi.

Aussie Mike's fluid swing got leaky under pressure. Fifty-year-old Kiwi, a genial chop from New Zealand, wouldn't break 100. I was a long shot with no short game, a once-decent 80-shooter who hadn't made a 10-foot putt since 2010. And nobody knew what to think of the Mongolian foursome, who dressed like tour pros. They'd learned the game by watching a David Leadbetter DVD.

The 20-mile ride to Pyongyang Golf Club took an hour. There was no traffic in the smog-shrouded capital, where only party leaders have cars. The deserted eight-lane boulevard was pocked with potholes that forced our bus driver to pick his way forward like a man in a minefield. We passed work crews tending rice paddies and cabbage fields. Old women bent under the weight of water buckets hanging from yokes strapped to their backs. Workers stopped to glance at our bus. We were a novelty, a bunch of foreign guys in golf caps rolling by in air-conditioned splendor.

The clubhouse at Pyongyang Golf Club is a green-gabled hulk on top of a hill. It was dim inside. A painting showing Kim Il Sung greeting world leaders filled one wall, but it was hard to make out the details. Here as elsewhere lights stayed off during the day to conserve electricity. As our eyes adjusted we beheld a row of white-gloved young women in lavender uniforms. Clearly chosen for their looks, our caddies could have passed for Korean Air flight attendants. They had little training as caddies and spoke next to no English. Mine, the beaming Sun-Yi, could say "iron seven," "wood one," "good sha" and "caddie fee 10 euro." Determined to prove herself, she insisted on marking and cleaning my ball even on the practice green.

"Attention, s'il vous plaît." That was Maxime, the tournament director. Plump, silver-haired Maxime, a former PGA European Tour rules official who had made Ryder Cup rulings for Jack Nicklaus and Seve Ballesteros, would take no guff from the sorry likes of us. Rather than stroke play or match play, he announced, we would play the first round by the Callaway scoring system.

"First on the tee will be…Mr. Cook from America!"

I hadn't hit a golf ball in six months. There was no driving range; I was jet-lagged, surprised, with no time to concoct an excuse to let somebody else hit. Sun-Yi handed me a gleaming Top-Flite and a tee. Photographers from the Associated Press and North Korea's Ministry of Sport crouched beside the tee marker to record my opening shot. Josh strolled past with a word of encouragement. "Better you than me, dude," he said.

I took a practice stab. Swing easy, I thought. Rotate hips and shoulders over the left knee. Or is it the right knee? Don't think. Above all don't think about dribbling a grounder off in news photos worldwide. Or whiffing.

At the top of my swing, the ball looked like Pluto. The next sound surprised me: polite applause. My ball climbed over the fairway as Sun-Yi reached for my clubs. "Good sha!" she said.

"The 2012 Democratic People's Republic et cetera, et cetera is under way," Maxime said.

On the green, Sun-Yi went into her elaborate ball-marking ceremony. Stooping at the knees, she marked my ball with a one-won coin, cleaned the ball and cupped it in her hands as if it were a robin's egg. When my turn to putt came she replaced the ball, studied my line to the hole, then showed how the putt would break with a swooping motion of her arms. I pictured my Top-Flite swooping into the cup. Instead it died on the way. The greens were seeded with a strain of grass that seemed to exude glue.

"Five," I told my playing partner, a Mongolian lawyer named Chuluun Munkhbat. "How about you?" Per Maxime's instructions we were keeping each other's scores, just like tour pros.

"One," he said.

"Funny! For a second I thought you said one."

"Yes. One."

I'd watched him make bogey. Maybe this was golf in the Kimdom—we all knew about Kim Jong Il's 11 aces and "official" score of 38 under par in his first round of golf. I wouldn't be party to a third-world plot to bust the records of the old Scottish game. "Mr. Chuluun, you didn't have a hole-in-one," I said.

"Yes, one. Like you."

It took a minute of batting phrases through the language barrier to figure out that Mongolia's golfers, all 50 or 60 of them, keep score by recording how many strokes over par they shoot on each hole. A bogey's a one, a double bogey a two.

We shook hands. "Mr. Chuluun, let's make some zeroes."

SMOG COVERS PYONGYANG. WE GOT INTO NORTH KOREA. WOULD WE GET BACK OUT?

His face lit up. "Call me Munkhbat."

He zeroed both par-three holes on the front nine. I zeroed the par-fives. Feeling jaunty as we made the turn, I expected a hot dog at a halfway house but got a multicourse meal instead. In a dining hall at the top of a rickety staircase, where a boxy RCA TV showed ranks of marching soldiers, silent waitresses served bean sprouts in soy sauce, thin-sliced pork, steaming dumplings, crunchy whitefish, rice curry, kimchi, clams, mushrooms in peanut paste and peas with orange and purple tendrils of something or other. We washed it down with ice-cold Tiger beer, the Singaporean lager featured in Tropic Thunder. Londoner Alex had us hip-hooraying our hosts until he noticed the numbers stamped on the bottom of his beer can.

"Two fowsin' ten?"

All our beers were past their expiration dates. Importing stale beer helps North Korea fight its trade deficit, which the regime blames on American sanctions.

Alex held his Tiger beer aloft. "Drink up, lads," he said, "before it's too late!"

Munkhbat and I waddled to the 10th tee with bellies full of Tigers. We spent much of the afternoon up to our knees in the course's jungly rough. Two hours later I limped in with a round of 90. Bogey golf.

Maxime collected scorecards. By his reckoning, given our handicaps and some strange rules that made no sense at all, my 90 was worse than Munkhbat's 102. I'd shot my way to second-to-last place with the second-best score of the day. Our leader was Simon. Alex offered his countryman a toast. "To Simon. Cunt-gratulations!"

In the evening our minders led the way to the Pyongyang Circus. A live orchestra accompanied acrobats and dancing bears while the crowd—mostly soldiers—-applauded in unison as if keeping time to music. We golfers cheered the waltzing, rope-skipping bears and went wild for the feature attraction, a baboon that roller-skated down a slide to the stage, where he leaped and dunked a basketball.

Celtics fan Josh yawned. "Big deal. Nobody was guarding him."

Back at the Yanggakdo, the state--sponsored TV channel was running a nature documentary. In one sequence a colony of ants encountered a stream. The ants formed a raft, a squiggling Frisbee-size mass of themselves, and floated into the water. The ones on the bottom drowned, but the others made it across. I wanted to yell, "Korean ants, save yourselves!" What would the electronic ears in the walls make of that? Instead I did push-ups and practiced my putting. Let them listen to grunts and groans.

Day two brought a new scoring plan called the Stableford system in which double bogeys and worse don't hurt your score. My new playing partner, Kiwi, the genial duffer from New Zealand, said he ran a candy factory in China. "Guess what's one of our top items," he said, pronouncing it "oitems."

I guessed candy.

"Edible underwear! Quoit popular with the Choinese. We also make a gummy dildo."

After a bouncy nine and another multicourse lunch, we joined the others at the 10th tee for a long-drive contest. I set the pace until the second guy hit. Antti, the tall Finn, thumped one 310 yards but was DQ'd by Maxime when his ball ran into the rough, leaving the 40-euro pot to Simon for his 300-yarder.

I needed to par the long 18th hole to stay alive in the tournament. My three-wood second shot bounced into sticky rough a hundred yards from the green. "You moit tike a drop," Kiwi clucked. But I hadn't flown 8,000 miles and surrendered my cell phone to play for sixes. I took an iron seven and slashed. Leaves and roots flew. Sun-Yi covered her eyes. The ball blooped into a gully short of the green. My chip ran past the hole. My putt rifled off the back of the tin cup, popped straight up and fell in. "Nice pa!" Sun-Yi chimed. We shook hands, a folded 10-euro bill passing from my hand to hers. Ten euros, equal to about $13, was a windfall for Sun-Yi, who probably gave it to her father when she got home. If he's a typical worker, her father earns about $21 a week.

Maxime, tallying scores in the clubhouse, promised to decipher his rankings in time for tomorrow's final round. Simon looked unbeatable with his 30-plus handicap and net scores in the 50s. Dinner was sizzling beef at North Korea's number one restaurant. That's its name: Restaurant Number 1. Picking strips of meat off steaming hibachis, we dipped them in soy and mustard sauces. Until Mr. Liu mentioned that we weren't eating beef.

Two dozen chopsticks stopped in midair. Kiwi,

To be ccontinued on page 95.

HAIR AND MAKE UP BY EDWIN RAMOS / STYLED BY VINCE FLORES / SHOOT ON LOCATION AT THE PALO ALTO LEISURE AND RESIDENTIAL ESTATES, BARAS RIZAL SPECIAL THANKS TO MEGA EAST

BEAUTY IN PARADOX

WRITTEN BY LAUREN ACURANTES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANCO RAYMUNDO

FOR A PLAYBOY PLAYMATE TO PROFESS THAT SHE IS SHY AND HAS INSECURITIES ABOUT HER BODY SEEMS CONTRADICTORY YET ODDLY ENDEARING. "I DON'T THINK I'M THAT SEXY. I THINK MY BOOBS ARE TOO SMALL," PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH NICOLE AUSTRIA ADMITTED. PRIOR TO HER FIRST-EVER NUDE PHOTO SHOOT.

THIS FASCINATING COMBINATION OF BEING UNSURE YET BOLD ENOUGH TO BARE IT ALL RESONATES WITH WOMEN WHO HAVE A NEED TO OVERCOME THEIR INSECURITIES. AND YES, MEN WILL LINE UP, WANTING TO BE THE ONE TO REASSURE HER OF HER BEAUTY AND FLAWLESSNESS.

"Women tend to be more insecure about their bodies *kasi meron tayong idea na kung ano dapat yung* "perfect" body. But I think, we should stop comparing with each other and just be sexy in our own skin," said the 26-year-old full-time model.

A former PLAYBOY bunny, Nicole Austria is clearly taking her own advice to heart by starting the new year baring it all as the year's first Playmate.

"I am grateful for this chance to be able to be a part of PLAYBOY Philippines. I've modeled for other men's magazines before but posing for PLAYBOY has always been my dream since this is one of the most famous and most successful men's magazines in the world," she gushes.

As further proof that this lithe beauty is fascinated by the oddity of human behavior, consider her taste in men.

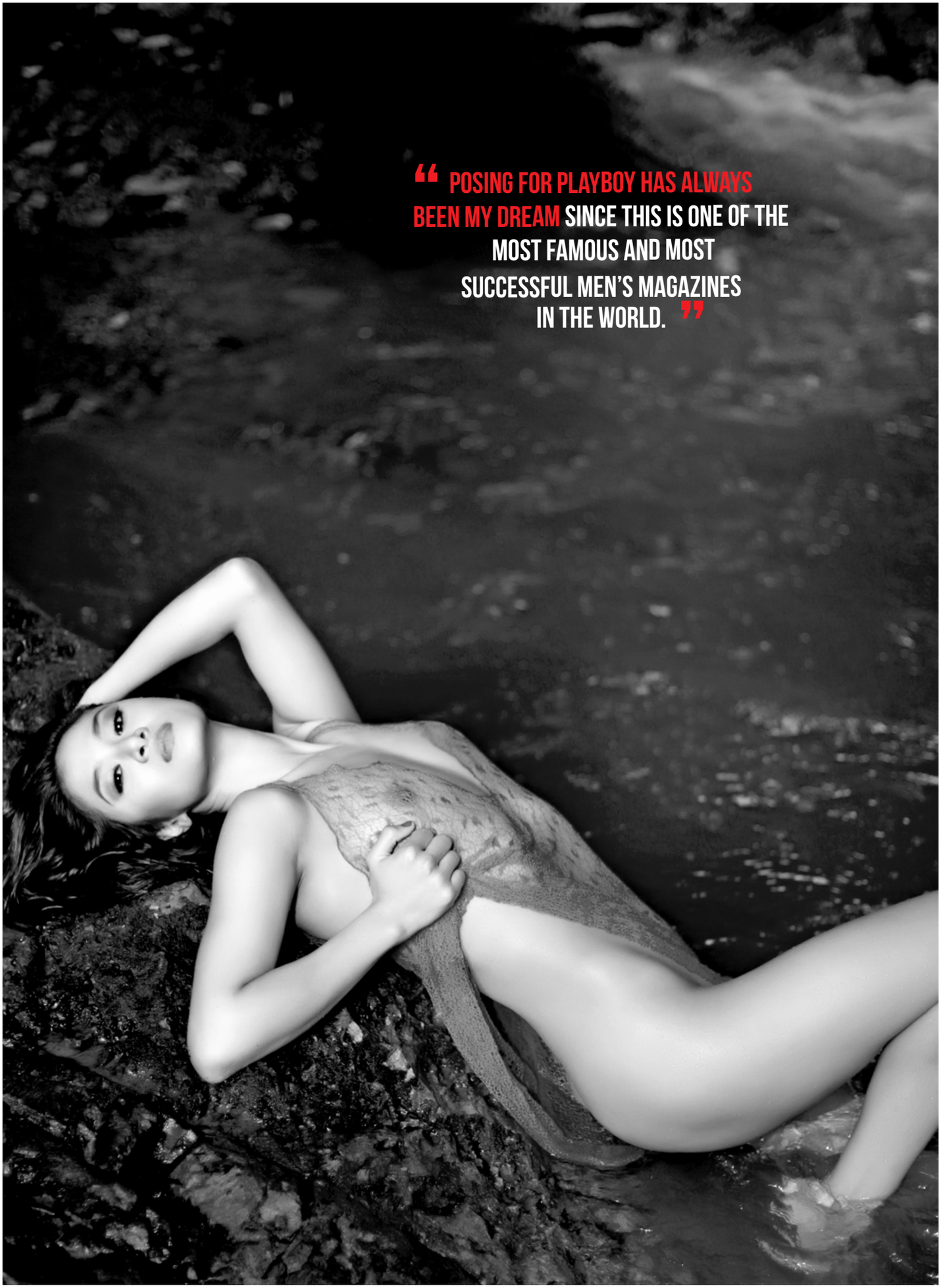
"I like guys who are honest – the silent and mysterious type. And if I'm comfortable with that guy, automatic *gusto ko uminom*," she sheepishly admits. So, lads, in order to win her heart, be open yet slightly secretive at the same time. Bring a bottle of wine. And maybe some Korean food. Then be prepared for a night of soft loving and pure sensuality.

"I love Korean cuisine, and in the future, I hope to be able to travel to South Korea. I know that there are already a lot of Korean restaurants in the area but I'm pretty sure that there are still areas there where I can sample unique dishes," she said, dreamily.

Travelling became a big part of Nicole's future plans ever since her recent stint in Japan where she got more experience as a model by participating at car shows and promotional events.

"I'm a homebody. I can spend a whole day just staying home in front of the computer or sleeping or cleaning. So travelling to another country really helped me be more open and be more adventurous," she said.

And while Miss January is on the lookout for a more stable job—be it in or out of the country, PLAYBOY readers can feast their eyes on this sumptuous beauty that is the walking epitome of sweetness,



“ POSING FOR PLAYBOY HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY DREAM SINCE THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS AND MOST SUCCESSFUL MEN’S MAGAZINES IN THE WORLD. ”

HUMOR
PLAYBOY PARTY JOKES

Give it to me!" a girlfriend shouted at her lover. "I'm so fucking wet, give it to me now!" "You can scream all you want," he said, "but with manners like that I'm never going to give you the umbrella."

A Japanese businessman visiting New York City stopped at a bar and told the bartender that he would like "a Stoli with a twist." The bartender replied, "Once upon a time…"

Did you know that if you put your ear against a stranger's ear, you can hear them say, "What the fuck are you doing?"

According to research, sex during pregnancy is always safe—unless your wife comes home.

A state trooper pulled over a biker and after inspecting his license and registration informed him that he was going to have to spend the night in jail. "What's the charge?" the biker demanded. "None," replied the officer. "It's free."

What is the difference between an anal thermometer and an oral thermometer? The taste.

A father bought a lie-detecting robot that slaps you if you lie. He decided to test it out on his son at supper. "Where were you last night?" he asked. "I was at the library," the son replied. The robot slapped the son. "Okay, I was at a friend's house," the son admitted. "Doing what?" the father asked. "Watching a movie," the son replied. "Toy Story." The robot slapped the son. "That's disgusting," the father yelled. "When I was your age, I didn't even know what porn was." The robot slapped the father. The mother laughed and said, "He certainly is your son!" The robot slapped the mother.

A man walked in on his stepdaughter pleasuring herself with a cucumber. "Oh God, that's disgusting!" he yelled. "I was going to eat that, and now it's going to taste like cucumber."

Bellhop, handle my bag!" a pompous man said upon arriving at a hotel. So the bellhop felt up his wife.

How was last night?" a man asked his friend. "Well my wife met me at the front door wearing a sexy negligee," the friend answered. "That's great," the man said. "Actually it wasn't," the friend said. "She was just coming home."

A man found himself in an airport interrogation room. "What kind of pervert are you?" the TSA agent asked him. "I was just following instructions," the man said. "The screener told me, 'If you have anything in your pants, you have to take it out.'"

A woman nagged her boyfriend into getting a circumcision. As he nervously awaited the procedure in the hospital, a nurse approached him and said, "Don't worry. It won't be long now."

A mother decided to have "the talk" with her son. After she finished, the boy sat silently. "Do you have any questions?" the mother asked. "Yes. How about kittens?" the boy asked. "In exactly the same way as with babies," answered the mother. "Wow!" the boy exclaimed. "Daddy will fuck anything."

CHARLIE SHEEN

LOOKING AT THE DRUG-FUELLED NIGHT BINGES, THE TALES OF PROMISCUITY THAT SHOWCASE AN UNABASHED FASCINATION FOR PORN STARS AND TRASHED HOTEL ROOMS, ONE IS QUICK TO SAY THAT CHARLIE SHEEN IS LIVING THE LIFE OF A ROCK STAR, COMPLETE WITH A "LIVE FAST, DIE YOUNG" INSTRUCTION MANUAL. WHILE A NUMBER OF FAILED MARRIAGES, CUSTODY DISPUTES, DRUGS AND A VERY BAD TEMPER CAN EASILY BE TRANSLATED INTO A RECIPE FOR THE PERFECT HOLLYWOOD MELTDOWN, MR. SHEEN'S VERY PUBLIC ONE OUTSHINES ALL THE REST. HE WAS SHORN OF RESTRAINT, AND HE WAS UNAPOLOGETIC. EVEN AFTER HE WAS PLUCKED FROM THE CBS SHOW *TWO AND A HALF MEN*, HE CONTINUED TO MAKE DEROGATORY COMMENTS ABOUT THE SERIES PRODUCER AND DISPLAYED A BEHAVIOR THAT MADE PEOPLE DOUBT HIS EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL STABILITY. HE FED THE MEDIA WITH INTERVIEWS AND UPLOADED BIZARRE AND EVEN MORE REVEALING VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE. HE RANTED ABOUT HAVING ADONIS BLOOD, BEING SPECIAL, AND OFFICIALLY COINING THE TERM "WINNING". SURELY SOMETHING GENUINELY MESSY AND NOVEL SHOULD GET THE ENTERTAINMENT-HUNGRY PUBLIC TRANSFIXED RATHER THAN APPALLED. HE DREW MORE THAN 1.5 MILLION FOLLOWERS ON TWITTER AND HAS NOW SET A NEW GUINNESS WORLD RECORD AS THE *"FASTEST TIME TO REACH 1 MILLION FOLLOWERS"*. HE WAS A WALKING STUDY ON THE SOCIOLOGY OF ENTERTAINMENT AND PUBLICITY THAT IS AMERICA.

Born with a Hollywood spoon in his mouth, Sheen is the youngest son and the third of four children of actor Martin Sheen and Janet Templeton. His appearances at Oliver Stone's Platoon and *Wall Street* earned him a solid recognition that went beyond his movie star lineage. He continued his bankability in films and gained a following as a comedian after appearing in several comical flicks. He made a very successful transition from film to television as Michael J. Fox's replacement in ABC's *Spin City*, earning the series its highest ratings. He later on got cast in the sitcom *Two and a Half Men* as Charlie Harper—the character having been loosely based on Charlie's enigmatic cool-guy persona. During the sitcom's eighth season, he was already earning a whopping $1.8 million per episode making Charlie Sheen the highest paid television actor of his time.

Despite this highly publicized disintegration, playfully dubbed as "the meltdown of the century", Lionsgate was in total agreement with FX that the best thing to do was to get Charlie back on television. Who wouldn't if people are on the prowl for his next winning move, albeit acting dexterity? Anger Management, a TV adaptation of a 2003 movie that starred Adam Sandler and Jack Nicholson, sees Mr. Sheen in the role of Charlie Goodson, a popular and once promising baseball player who in a fit of rage, injured himself with a bat. This incident led to the decline of his high profile profession. A career shift finds him smack in the middle of a very contradicting role as he finds himself counseling a group of misfits, as he struggles with the pressures of maintaining a healthy relationship with his ex-wife and their teenage daughter, all these on top of his ever present anger issues. Mr. Sheen is happy to be back in television, relishing the glimmer of hope with the show's theme of atonement. The public could not seem to get enough of Charlie Sheen seeing that the series debut alone drew nearly 5.5 million viewers. Anger Management will continue to run for a couple more years. Mr. Sheen has mentioned that he intends for the series to be the swan song of his career as a television actor. Producers cannot complain.

In spite of his commercial success his life continues to be a tumultuous roller-coaster ride. Already married, and divorced thrice, he is a father to five children. He has two daughters, named Sam and Lola by actress Denise Richards and has twin sons named Bob and Max with Brooke Mueller. His eldest daughter is named Cassandra Jade Estevez, the mother of whom is a former high school sweetheart. In between accusations of domestic violence, drug use, restraining orders, and very ugly custody battles, he remains very positive, sticking to his mantra to be a winning dad while he continues to fight for his children. Wanting to clean his act is room for forgiveness in itself. The brute ingénue takes on his struggles and his feet back on the ground, his eyes back on a prize. In an interview with *The New York Times*, Sheen moves on and forward by saying, "When I'm done with this business it's just going to be about soccer games and amusement parks, and when this ends, I'm done."

(BY FATIMA TORRES)

by ERIC SPITzNAGEL

PLAYBOY INTERVIEW CHARLIE SHEEN

A CANDID CONVERSATION WITH THE INFAMOUS BAD BOY ABOUT HIS HUGELY PUBLIC MELTDOWN, HIS RECOVERY AND THE COLLATERAL DAMAGE IT ALL CAUSED

"I'm not crazy anymore," Charlie Sheen announced this past January at the Fox Network Television Critics Association party in Pasadena, California. He said it with a chuckle, but there was an unmistakable sincerity to his confession. Usually when famous actors suffer a public scandal there are apologies and pleas for forgiveness. Not too often do they come right out and admit they went bat-shit crazy.

Of course, denying his insanity might have been an exercise in futility. Few celebrities have had quite as dramatic or memorable a meltdown as Charlie Sheen. When 2011 began he was one of the highest-paid actors on TV, earning an estimated $40 million annually for starring on Two and a Half Men. And then, seemingly overnight, he went off the rails. The show took a production hiatus in late January as Sheen dealt with his public addictions to drugs, porn stars, trashing hotel rooms, etc., and during the next few months he went on a media tirade, doing increasingly erratic TV and radio interviews. He coined such catchphrases as "winning," "tiger blood" and "Adonis DNA." He claimed to be a warlock and a Vatican assassin who was fed up with "pretending I'm not a total bitchin' rock star from Mars." One minute he bragged about "banging seven-gram rocks" during a typical night of partying, and the next minute the only drug he'd admit to using was called Charlie Sheen, which he claimed normal people couldn't take without melting their face and causing their children to weep over their exploded bodies. He introduced the world to his "goddesses," two girlfriends (one, Bree Olson, is a former porn star) who lived and had sex with him at his self-described Sober Valley Lodge. In March Sheen was fired by Warner Bros. for "felony offenses involving moral turpitude," which at the time seemed to be an understatement.

It took more than a year, but Sheen is finally back on TV with a new comedy, Anger Management, on the FX network. He plays a minor league baseball player turned therapist, and it will be either a triumphant return for the troubled actor or the final nail in his acting career's coffin. We sent writer ***Eric Spitznagel****, who recently interviewed Jon Hamm and Craig Ferguson for* PLAYBOY*, to meet with Sheen and find out whether the former tiger-blood-fueled warlock is really on the road to recovery. He reports: "After rehearsal for Anger Management wrapped, Sheen and I talked in his trailer, the infamous former party bus he's had since Spin City that is now decorated with crayon drawings from his children and outfitted with a fridge weirdly lacking in alcoholic beverages.*

"The next day, he invited me to his home in a Los Angeles gated community, just down the street from rock guitarist Slash. Once again the setting was more domestic than debauched. There was an actual apple pie cooling on the stove. 'It's all set dressing,' Sheen joked. 'As soon as you leave, all the drug paraphernalia and porn stars come out of the attic.' Sheen made me a smoothie, spiked with nothing but strawberries. After he showed me his dad's helmet from Apocalypse Now and we'd talked at length about baseball and why the Chicago Cubs will probably never win another World Series, we sat at his kitchen table and got down to business. During our conversation Sheen smoked so many Marlboro Reds that even my lungs hurt."

PLAYBOY: Anger Management is the second time you play a character named Charlie, after *Two and a Half Men*, right?

SHEEN: The third. I was Charlie on *Spin City* too.

PLAYBOY: Is that by choice? Is it just easier for you to remember?

SHEEN: I think it happens a lot in sitcoms. Jerry Seinfeld, Ray Romano and Bob Newhart all used their real first names. It's also easier for audiences so they're not confused by a new character. They feel they're already familiar with me right off the bat.

PLAYBOY: The Charlie you played on *Two and a Half Men* had a lot in common with you. How is the Anger Management Charlie similar to you?

SHEEN: He's not. I hear that shit all the time. It's like, Really, you want me to put my life on TV? Put it on fucking cable on Mars. "But it's so similar!" Really? Have you ever hung out with me? Idiots.

PLAYBOY: So you never draw on your personal life for your fictional life?

SHEEN: Now and again there are themes that might be similar. I think that's fine. If it's done tastefully, it's cool. There are times when they go too far and I'll tell them. I'm done playing a drunken, womanizing, immature character. This time I'm playing an adult. The guy on Anger Management is professionally accomplished, a former ballplayer learning to overcome his anger issues.

PLAYBOY: You went to anger therapy, right?

SHEEN: I went for a year. I learned some good shit there. This may sound stupid, but it all comes down to sticks and stones. You know what I mean? Sticks and stones may break my bones——

PLAYBOY: But words will never hurt me.

SHEEN: Exactly. There's so much value in that. The idea of leaving the room sometimes when you're angry. Just leave the room! If someone follows you, go to a different room. If they keep following you, get in your car. If they follow you in your car, drive to a police station. There are ways to not engage. It's like my dad [actor Martin Sheen] always said: Women know what buttons to push because they helped build the machine. So every time you give in to that, you're playing right into their hands. It's a good point. He's a wise man.

PLAYBOY: Your dad just celebrated a big anniversary.

SHEEN: His 50th wedding anniversary.

PLAYBOY: How does somebody get to 50 years in a marriage?

SHEEN: I have no fucking idea. [laughs]

PLAYBOY: Has he given you any relationship advice?

SHEEN: Dad always stressed the value of the truth. He said you never have to look over your shoulder when you tell the truth. You never have to remember the details, because they are what they are. And you don't have to make sure your story matches everyone else's. Just tell the truth and you're home free. If there are amends to be made, you make them. You own it and move on.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of telling the truth, we should talk about last year and your whole so-called meltdown.

SHEEN: Where do you want to begin?

PLAYBOY: Let's start with the basics. What the hell happened?

SHEEN: [Laughs] I don't know what happened. I think I cracked.

PLAYBOY: Did *Two and a Half Men* break your brain?

SHEEN: I don't think it was the show in particular. It was the buildup of all the time I've been in the business, the divorces and everything. I started to unravel. I was mad about having to play the game—not that I was playing it well, but I'd been doing it for so long. I finally just said the things I had always been thinking. [laughs] But in the middle of a psychotic break.

PLAYBOY: Sean Penn called you a performance artist. Is it possible the whole year was one big hoax?

SHEEN: That's cool that he said that. It's a compliment, but it's not what was going on. I didn't have a master plan. I didn't realize it was going to create such a global firestorm. At the time, it felt like I was watching a lot of it from above, you know what I mean?

PLAYBOY: Like an out-of-body -experience?

SHEEN: Yeah. It was surreal. And it never occurred to me where this stuff was going to end up or how it was going to be perceived. I didn't care about anything beyond the moment. And then I was a little shocked by how huge the whole thing became. It was like an organism you couldn't stop. It kept growing.

PLAYBOY: Some of the things you said will haunt you forever. "Winning" is now part of the pop-culture lexicon.

SHEEN: I guess so. You know what's interesting about that? It's stated in the present tense. We were in the act of winning. It was current. It wasn't "We've won" or "We're going to win."

PLAYBOY: It was an active verb.

SHEEN: Exactly.

PLAYBOY: Is that why people connected with it so much?

SHEEN: That's part of it. The economy was in the toilet and people were dealing with their horrible bosses. So they were like, "Oh, here's a guy who stood up to his boss, who had the balls to say, 'Fuck it, you're wrong, I'm right.' "

PLAYBOY: You kept insisting you were winning when everything that was happening in your life and career at the time seemed like the complete opposite of winning.

SHEEN: Absolutely. I was in total denial.

PLAYBOY: Was it just positive thinking? If you say you're winning enough times, maybe things will turn around?

SHEEN: It wasn't that bleak in my

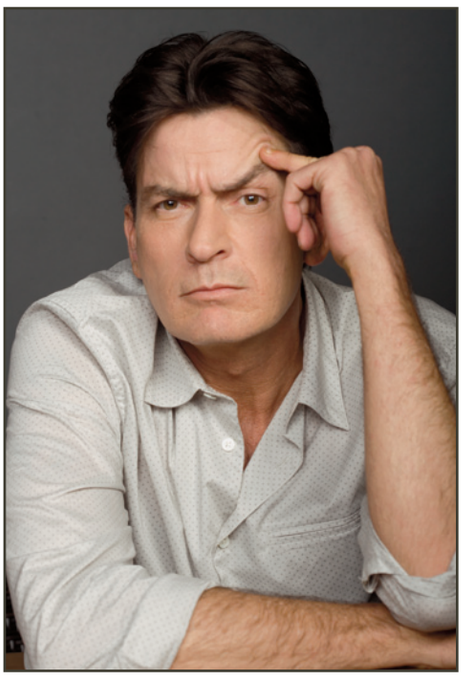
head. I felt I was winning by finally being able to speak my mind. I felt that was some sort of victory. And then it was fueled by the insane public outpouring of support.

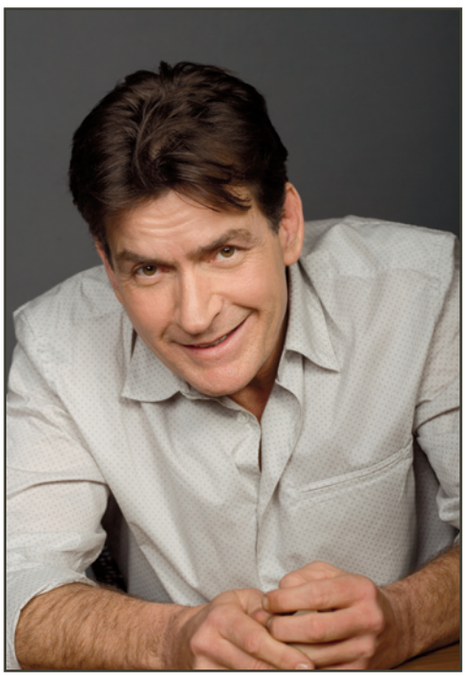
PLAYBOY: Not only were you winning, but you called yourself a warlock.

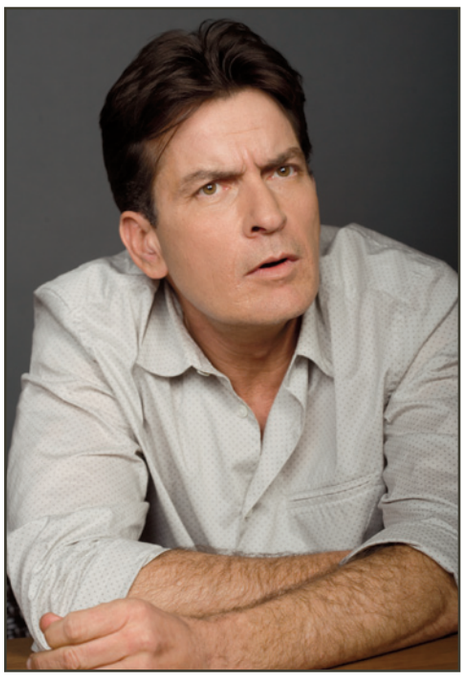
SHEEN: I didn't know what the hell a warlock was; I just liked the way it sounded. It's got war in it; it's got a kah sound. War-lock. Remember the Salem warlock society? They were going to cast a hex on me.

PLAYBOY: Because you were making a mockery of their religion?

SHEEN: Something like that. I was hurting the warlock name. I was like, "Bring it on! I'll eat your hex for breakfast." [laughs] It's so fucking stupid. I'm in a beef with a warlock society? You're kidding me, right?







How do you go from making Oliver Stone movies to being in a feud with warlocks?

PLAYBOY: The list goes on and on. Tiger blood, Adonis DNA, you're on a drug called Charlie Sheen.

SHEEN: [Laughs] Most of it came out of nowhere. It wasn't planned, it was just random. The tiger blood? I don't know. It's just a very dangerous animal. And there's a tiger in *Apocalypse Now*, by the way, so maybe there's a connection there. Adonis DNA? I don't know what the fuck that was about. That was just stupid. That went a little far.

PLAYBOY: You made a lot of allusions to war during that period, especially when talking about *Two and a Half Men* creator Chuck Lorre and CBS. Did it feel as though you were in a literal war?

SHEEN: It felt like combat, yeah. I don't know what real combat feels like, but it felt like emotional combat, like spiritual combat. One thing I can't tolerate is being disrespected. Fuck that. I'm talking about literal, genuine examples of disrespect, where you feel unappreciated. Guys want to be respected and acknowledged. They want to feel what they contributed matters. I felt I contributed a lot, and suddenly it didn't matter.

PLAYBOY: Why would CBS and Lorre change their minds about you?

SHEEN: Because they read things about me and believed them. They were like, "He's crazy" or "He's drunk" or "He's fucked-up" or "He's a fucking weirdo" or whatever. But if you're special, you're tortured. I know that sounds arrogant, but you can't not be special and have a 30-year career. You can't not be a little different from others and be successful for three decades. Your mind has to work a little differently than the average brain. But here's the good news. I'm not there anymore. I'm not working with CBS or Warner Bros. or Chuck anymore. Good news for them and good news for me.

PLAYBOY: Did you ever enjoy yourself on *Two and a Half Men*?

SHEEN: The early stuff was fun. It was fresh, and we were still kind of finding our way. The first time [*Two and a Half Men* co-star] Jon Cryer and I read together, it was magic. No question.

PLAYBOY: How is your relationship with Jon these days?

SHEEN: I don't have one.

PLAYBOY: You said some cruel things about him last year. You called him a troll and a traitor. Was that the heat of the moment, or did you really feel that way?

SHEEN: That was wrong. I whaled on him unnecessarily.

PLAYBOY: But at the time did you feel he should have defended you?

SHEEN: I made a mistake. But yes, I felt he should have come forward with some kind of support. But says who? What rule book is that written in? It's not. He was trying to keep the shit together, trying to cover my ass, pick up the slack. He just got caught in the crossfire. He's a beautiful man and a fucking fabulous dude and I miss him. I need to repair that relationship, and I will. I will reach out and do whatever is necessary.

PLAYBOY: Looking back on it a year later, do you have a better understanding of what went wrong, why you lost *Two and a Half Men*?

SHEEN: I know exactly what went wrong. CBS and Warner Bros. were in breach. That's it. That's why this thing never went to any kind of arbitration. They knew they'd have to admit they screwed up. They were too involved in their own egos and their own emotions. I guess that's why I went full-court press on them, because I knew they didn't have a case. My job was to show up and act; their job was to write. Or it was someone's job to write, and Chuck Lorre decided he wasn't going to do it anymore.

PLAYBOY: They would probably claim it had more to do with your drug problems.

SHEEN: That was a fucking hernia, by the way.

PLAYBOY: What was?

SHEEN: In January, before I got fired, when I went to the hospital. The hernia was real. Everybody thought I had OD'd or whatever. No, I had a fucking hernia blow out of my stomach. I called the paramedics, because that's what you do, right?

PLAYBOY: There were tabloid reports that you had a suitcase of cocaine delivered to your house.

SHEEN: That's such bullshit. And that's what I got fired over. I didn't get fired for the Plaza Hotel thing [when he was accused of assaulting a porn star]; I didn't get fired for the Vegas bender. I got fired for a hernia. And it's real. Check it out. [pulls up shirt] See that? [pushes out stomach and points to hernia scar] It's there. I didn't get it fixed because I thought we were going to court and I would have to show this from the stand.

PLAYBOY: There were rumors that the hernia happened after several days of constant partying and drugs.

SHEEN: No, that's just not true. It was because of a Dave Chappelle sketch.

PLAYBOY: Oh, come on.

SHEEN: Remember that scene where he's a blind white supremacist who doesn't know he's black? Have you seen it? It's the funniest thing in the world. He becomes a Klansman, and he's railing against black people. It's insanely brilliant.

PLAYBOY: We're familiar with it. "If anyone's gonna have sex with my sister, it's going to be me."

SHEEN: Right. It's fucking hilarious. I'd never seen it, and I laughed myself into a hernia. That is 100 percent true.

PLAYBOY: So forget Chuck Lorre, forget Warner Bros. and CBS. It's Dave -Chappelle's fault that you got fired?

it can do. But that was kind of an experiment back then. I was just kind of winging it, and it worked.
PLAYBOY: To a lot of people it sounds like denial.
SHEEN: Of course it does. It sounds like you think you're above it all, that you're smarter than everybody else. But it's not about that. I just think the whole disease model of addiction is crap. It's rooted in fiction and junk science.
PLAYBOY: But you understand why it's hard to take that seriously. Many alcoholics say things like "I can quit anytime I want." But they don't—and can't.
SHEEN: Here's how I think of it. Someone's in rehab, right? And he's like, "Hey, man, I've got 45 days and then I'm clean." Of course it seems that easy. You're in a place with no drugs and you can't leave. Way to go, man. Try it in the real world.
PLAYBOY: You don't believe in rehab?
SHEEN: I don't. I believe in detox. I think detox is smart. You've got a guy who's in an opiate cycle or a dope cycle or something, and he can't get out of it. You shut him down long enough so at least his body can start working for itself again. I'm not saying in all situations it's bad to get help. I'm saying sometimes it's okay to trust yourself. Because that's the one thing they drill into you at these fucking AA meetings: Don't trust yourself. Your brain is broken.
PLAYBOY: Put your faith in a higher power.
SHEEN: Exactly. Fuck that. I'm putting my faith in myself, not a higher power. My brain is broken? My brain wasn't broken enough to afford the 100 grand to get in here, you dickheads.
PLAYBOY: You're single right?
SHEEN: At the moment, yeah.
PLAYBOY: No more goddesses?
SHEEN: Not anymore.
PLAYBOY: You had rules for that relationship: Nobody panics, there's no judgment.
SHEEN: Yeah, park your judgment at the door. Nobody dies. And one more—enjoy every moment! I don't know, it seems pretty simple to me.
PLAYBOY: Was there anything missing from those rules? Anything that would have kept your relationship with the goddesses together?
SHEEN: Those rules were created for a very specific circumstance, but they're still pretty good. It seems like a basic groundwork you can build on. The judgment thing is especially hard. My mom offered me $500 when I was 12 years old not to say anything negative for an entire day. I didn't make it past breakfast. And $500 at the time was like a million bucks, but I couldn't make it.
PLAYBOY: Was there anything about the goddesses people didn't understand?
SHEEN: Everything. It was more fodder for them to criticize, more Sheen antics to judge when those same people would have loved to have a similar situation.
PLAYBOY: Do you still think it's possible for an intimate relationship to survive when more than two people are involved?
SHEEN: I think it was a hell of an idea but with the wrong people involved. I don't know, man. I'm kind of old-fashioned in a lot of ways. I prefer mano a mano. Even if you have two girls in the house, it's not like we're together all the time. But I need variety. Every man does. Not everyone will admit it, but that's how we're wired. It's in our ancestral blueprint.
PLAYBOY: So how do any marriages stay together?
SHEEN: It's just impulse control. The married guy looks at the hot chick and thinks, Oh, she's hot. But he doesn't do anything. When you can't control the impulse, you make a decision that burns down the whole kingdom. You can have rules at home that are different from the rest of the world's as long as you're not hurting anyone. People think it's insane up at my place. It's really not. There are always children there; there's always life there. It's just a good vibe.
PLAYBOY: Do you prefer to be single?
SHEEN: At least for now. It's definitely safer to be single, especially with this cottage industry that's devoted to extorting celebrities.
PLAYBOY: That's a real thing?
SHEEN: It is, yeah. There are businesses where women are recruited to hook up with famous men, get dirt on them and then sell it. This actually exists. It's fucking heinous.
PLAYBOY: How do you trust anybody?
SHEEN: We take phones and purses at my house, and people have to sign shit. I'm not living in the Pentagon, but I've been burned enough to have to take precautions. It's either that or choose a different type of woman or party guest, because you never know. Sometimes the right choice seems great at the moment, but then suddenly it's as if somebody detonated a suicide bomb.
PLAYBOY: Is that why you're drawn to prostitutes, because you already know what the financial arrangement is, so there are no hidden agendas?
SHEEN: I don't do that as much anymore. It's just not, I don't know.... [long pause] I always feel I traded my time for something that could've been more valuable or substantial.
PLAYBOY: Meaning what? Actual intimacy?
SHEEN: The problem with prostitutes is, what if you actually like somebody you meet in that situation? Where do you go from there? What do you do?
PLAYBOY: If it starts as a service, can it ever become more than that?
SHEEN: It can, absolutely. But it's hard. I'm not saying I'll never be with a prostitute again. Parts of it are soulless and parts of it are nourishing. It's always a roll of the dice. There are times when that's the plan, and I'll abort it because the vibe isn't right. Sometimes it's hoping for a different result each time. At some point, you either have to change the players or forfeit the game.
PLAYBOY: Your fondness for prostitutes dates back to your first sexual experience. You lost your virginity at the age of 15 to a Las Vegas prostitute.
SHEEN: I did, yeah. [laughs] Nothing further, Your Honor.
PLAYBOY: And you paid for it with your dad's credit card. How did you not get busted for that?
SHEEN: Oh, I did. It was a bad scene, man. I'm watching TV in our living room, and he's in his office 20 feet away. I'm sitting on the floor with a bag of chips or something, and all of a sudden a piece of paper falls in front of me. I look up, and my dad's already walking away. It's his Visa bill. There's one thing circled, and it's $350. There's an arrow pointing to it and three words: "What is this?" He had gone back into my bedroom and was just waiting for me.
PLAYBOY: He made you come to him?
SHEEN: He did. It was brilliant. That was a long walk. That was longer than giving up a game-seven bomb and having to make the walk back to the dugout. I was like a defense attorney going to trial against video evidence.
PLAYBOY: So what did you say?
SHEEN: I blamed it on my cousin Joey. I said it was Joey's idea. I was like, "You were asleep. We stole your credit card. Sorry, our bad. Uh, Joey went second, by the way." [laughs]
PLAYBOY: He didn't lecture you about sleeping with prostitutes?
SHEEN: Not really. He just hoped I understood that it's not love. I was like, "Really? You should have seen her, Dad. That's fucking true love." [laughs]
PLAYBOY: Are you following in your dad's parenting footsteps?
SHEEN: I try to. Even when I don't want to, it's there. We all have that moment of "Oh God, I sound like my dad." That happened to me recently. I remember he used to say to me, "This mess ain't going to clean itself up." I vowed I would never say that to my kids. But a few weeks ago I said the exact same sentence to Sam and Lola [his daughters with Denise Richards], word for word. "This mess ain't going to clean itself up!"
PLAYBOY: Your dad hasn't always been easy on you. He's talked about your drug problems publicly and was involved in at least one intervention. Are you ready to be the bad guy for your kids?
SHEEN: You have to. Hopefully they'll eventually realize you did it out of love and compassion and honoring the truth.
PLAYBOY: Your dad had a wild past and his own struggles with alcohol addiction. Did that make it harder to take him seriously when he lectured you?
SHEEN: Yes and no. I don't remember him being as bad as he remembers. The way he describes his behavior, the drinking and all that, doesn't ring true for me. I don't remember it being that bad.
PLAYBOY: Maybe you didn't see it.
SHEEN: Nah. There weren't a lot of secrets in our family. My parents had fights. They were pretty loud about it. It never got physical, but a dish always got broken somewhere. You could almost predict it. "Wait for it...wait for it...." Smash!
PLAYBOY: But as far as you knew, there was no partying or drinking?
SHEEN: I don't know. Maybe there was, but it's not my memory of what his life was like.
PLAYBOY: Do you think he's exaggerating, or did it never happen at all?
SHEEN: It's almost as if he's created a history. I don't know why he would do that. Maybe it's shame, guilt, remorse, whatever it is.
PLAYBOY: Remorse for what?
SHEEN: We moved a lot. He lived job to job, so we were always traveling. We'd live in houses for six months with no furniture. Beanbags were a big staple for us. He was doing the best he could. We weren't rich, but because of him I grew up all over the world. When I got home and had grade school geography, I was like, "Been there." That was pretty cool.
PLAYBOY: You celebrated your 11th birthday in the Philippines while your dad was shooting Apocalypse Now. Was it anything approaching normal?
SHEEN: It was the craziest time you could possibly imagine. The Philippines was a much different place back then. You could barely get a Snickers bar, much less a cake that wasn't filled with mold or rat shit. I remember one night we were in the bungalows where we lived at the time, and just as we were getting ready to go to bed, a naked Robert Duvall comes racing

through the room, screaming at the top of his lungs like an Indian. Then he leaves, and he doesn't poke his head back in to explain. He doesn't say, "I'm out here with Dennis Hopper and he put me up to this." Nothing. To this day I don't know what the hell that was about.

PLAYBOY: How do you feel about APOCALYPSE NOW as an adult?

SHEEN: Everything you need to know about life is in APOCALYPSE. Everything. When Marlon Brando says, "You have the right to kill me, but you don't have the right to judge me," that's it, man. That's the world right there.

PLAYBOY: How often do you rewatch it?

SHEEN: At least every six months. I can't talk to people who haven't seen it until they have. I tell girls that if I'm going to date them, they have to watch that movie and they have to listen to SPRINGSTEEN'S "BRILLIANT DISGUISE." Listen to that song and you'll know a little more about me.

PLAYBOY: You've made three baseball movies, and now you're playing a ballplayer. Should we assume you really like baseball?

SHEEN: Absolutely. There's something about every spring when baseball season starts again. There's a feeling that everything in the world is good again. When I was growing up, my bedroom was covered in baseball shit. I would tape baseball cards to the walls before I realized they would be valuable one day. That's the kind of stuff I went to bed with and woke up with.

PLAYBOY: You were apparently pretty good at baseball in your teens. How close did you come to playing pro?

SHEEN: Not close at all. I went to a camp called the Mickey Owen Baseball School, in Miller, Missouri, and I got scouted my final year there. I had a good arm for a guy my size, and it always surprised people. I also had decent speed. But I couldn't hit for shit. I remember contemplating all this when I was 16 or 17, trying to decide what I wanted to do with my life. Chris Penn, who was my best friend growing up, had just done Footloose. I saw how much money he was making and realized I was in the wrong business.

PLAYBOY: Was money that important to you?

SHEEN: A lot of people will say, "Oh, I got into acting because I wanted to explore my craft." They're a bunch of liars, unless they're Sean Penn, DeNiro or my dad. For the rest of us it was all about chicks and money. Seriously. It was about how I could get money so I could impress the girls and feel like I mattered.

PLAYBOY: You got to live vicariously as a ballplayer in some of your movies, such as MAJOR LEAGUE and EIGHT MEN OUT.

SHEEN: Yeah, but it never felt like the real thing. Shooting a movie can be so tedious. You're trying to get 20 different angles on the same swing. You never get into a rhythm. But I took it very seriously. When I was working on MAJOR LEAGUE, I trained with [Dodgers catcher] Steve Yeager.

PLAYBOY: You were taking steroids during the shoot, right?

SHEEN: That's right. I wanted to put a little zip on my fastball. I didn't want to look like I was lily-arming it up there. I was always a hit-the-spots, low-zone pitcher. But my character, Ricky Vaughn, is a flamethrower. With steroids I went from a modest 78 to a decent 85, which on film can be made to look in the 90s.

PLAYBOY: But aren't there health risks?

SHEEN: I got injured a lot afterward. Steroids build your muscles, but they don't build your tendons or ligaments. Once you start altering your body's blueprint, things start falling apart. Some players take steroids, and two years later, after they've broken records, suddenly they have back problems, shoulder problems, arm problems. They're out of the game for good.

PLAYBOY: Did you ever have roid rage?

SHEEN: Oh yeah. That's definitely a real thing. When you take steroids, you're pissed all day long. About nothing. You just wake up and you're fucking mad. But I had a trainer, Lyle Alzado, who was really smart. He'd been a defensive lineman for the National Football League. He knew enough guys who did steroids, and he knew enough doctors. I did steroids for only three months, and I never did them again. If there's a safe way to do steroids, we tried.

PLAYBOY: Some people think steroids have tarnished the sanctity of baseball. Do you agree?

SHEEN: Hey, man, back in the 1920s everyone was allowed one spitball pitcher. Why not have one guy on each team who takes steroids? Then it's even. People who are critical of steroids usually say the same thing: "Oh, it sends a bad message to the kids." How about the parents worry about that? How about parents become more heroic and send the right message at home before the kid gets to the ballpark? When you were growing up, your biggest heroes were probably your parents, right?

PLAYBOY: Sure.

SHEEN: They were bigger than life, they protected you, and they showed you things you wouldn't have otherwise seen. They were our heroes. And then athletes become our heroes, because they're superhuman. They do things nobody else can do. They're better than 6 billion other people. It's sad because there are a lot of inner-city situations where you have single-parent families. A dad or mom is working four jobs, taking eight buses and getting home at 11. They're not able to have as much influence over their kids' lives, because they're not around. Their kids end up looking up to the guy with the thousand tattoos and the bad attitude who's in the playoffs every year because he looks like a god and a hero. And yes, those people are gods; they are heroes. They're better than anybody alive.

PLAYBOY: But you're saying parents should still be the main role models for their -children?

SHEEN: Exactly. If they're worried about their kids using steroids, they should get to them first, before the athletes do.

PLAYBOY: Are you going to talk with your kids about drugs?

SHEEN: Probably, but I'm definitely not ready for it. What do you do? I have no idea. Do you tell them everything you did and then say "Don't do any of that stuff"? At least one of them is going to say, "But, Dad, I read about you in this article. You were pretty gnarly. Why shouldn't I have that kind of fun too?" What the hell do you say to that? Because it's not safe? Because you deserve a better life?

PLAYBOY: What happens if you find a bag of weed in their bedroom?

SHEEN: Well, I'd want to know about the quality and how much the damn thing costs—you know, just to make sure they're not getting fucking ripped off. And my next question would be "Is it Charlie Sheen OG?"

PLAYBOY: What's Charlie Sheen OG?

SHEEN: They now sell pot named after me in the dispensaries. And I'm not even a pot guy. I was so honored.

PLAYBOY: Do you stand by its quality?

SHEEN: Let's just say I tried it.

PLAYBOY: And you approve?

SHEEN: The quality's fine. There's too much quality, if anything. I couldn't feel my hands after a while. I smoked some with a friend, and she said, "What a trip. I'm with Charlie Sheen smoking Charlie Sheen." I was like, "How do you think I feel? I'm smoking myself!"

PLAYBOY: Would you do that with your kids? If you caught them with weed, would you want them to smoke it with you?

SHEEN: Good God no. I don't want to get high with my kids, because then everything is different forever. That's so stupid, I think. No, if I found weed in their room, I'd take it and wait. They're going to come to you at some point. They'll notice it's gone and go, "Oh shit. Where is it? Where is it?" Then when they fess up, I'll try to have as open a

"Before you make any New Year's resolutions that deal with morality or abstinence, may I see you in the coat room?"

dialogue about it as possible. I don't want them to do any drugs, but weed is better than Adderall. That's the worst drug ever. Everybody's on Adderall now—kids, adults, tweeners. It'll be the downfall of our society. That's why rehabs are filled with 12- and 13-year-olds, because they're all hooked on speed from the age of five.

PLAYBOY: Once they leave your house, you can't really control what they do, what drugs they try.

SHEEN: Yeah, but I have a deal with them. They have one, maybe two chances to call me anytime, no questions asked, and I will come and get them. But if there are signs of any physical damage on their bodies, then there's going to be gunplay involved. It's a whole different story for whatever house they're leaving. That shit gets burned to the ground. Period, the end. When it comes to my kids, I don't play around.

PLAYBOY: You've mentioned you might want to retire after Anger Management. Is that because you want to be a full-time dad?

SHEEN: Yeah, that's pretty much the reason. I can't tell you how many calls I've gotten at work: "He or she took their first step" or "He or she ate solid food" or "He or she rode a bike for the first time." I'm the breadwinner and I have to do this so my kids can have a life, but I feel I'm missing too much.

PLAYBOY: You could do what your dad did and just take your family everywhere.

SHEEN: Yeah, but that gets tough too. Sometimes they have to see things you don't want them to see. I remember when my dad was doing The Execution of Private Slovik. I was only nine at the time, and it was traumatic.

PLAYBOY: Why?

SHEEN: Because he was playing this character who's falling apart. He's so freaking good in that movie. You take the baddest dude in the world and put a camera on him and watch him unravel. But for a kid, you don't want to see that kind of vulnerability in your dad.

PLAYBOY: You didn't understand that he was just doing make-believe?

SHEEN: Not really. Growing up, there were times I thought my dad was insane. He'd always be in a corner, mumbling to himself. And we were like, "What's up with Dad? Does he hear voices or something?" It turns out he was always running dialogue in his head. I had a moment like that a couple of years ago. Sam and Lola were at the house, and I was running dialogue. The amount of stuff you have to keep in your head, especially doing television, is mind-boggling. And I heard Sam say to her sister, "Why is Dad talking to himself?" [laughs] And there it was. It was like a generational passing of the guard. Once again, I had become my father.

PLAYBOY: There are some ways you probably don't want to be like him, like having a heart attack at a young age.

SHEEN: I definitely don't want that. It freaked me out for a long time, because I think I was projecting fears about my own mortality onto his situation. I was so desperate to make it to my 37th birthday.

PLAYBOY: Because your dad had a heart attack at 36?

SHEEN: Right. And it seemed like my life was mirroring his in a lot of ways. I was in the Philippines with him for eight months while he shot Apocalypse, and then I went back 10 years later to make Platoon, which was my Vietnam film, my Apocalypse. It's a little strange, you know? It's a little freaking odd. I was seeing a lot of parallels between my dad and myself. I told myself, When I'm 36 it's going to happen.

PLAYBOY: You thought you were going to have a heart attack?

"Did I catch you at a bad time?"

SHEEN: I was convinced of it. He survived his, but I wouldn't survive mine. It's just a story I wrote in my head. It wasn't based on any fact. I just decided it was going to happen. And a lot of times you can manifest that shit.

PLAYBOY: Have you ever talked with him about it, how close he came to dying?

SHEEN: Oh yeah, a lot. And it's a trip, man, because I'm more about science than religion, but he talks about seeing that light and being pulled to it. It offered him eternal comfort, is how he described it. Radical, right? And then the light moved and he saw his family and his work and his life. And he had a choice. You either go toward eternal comfort or stay here and be responsible. He leaned toward responsibility, and that's when he came out of it and saw people around him.

PLAYBOY: Did hearing that make you less afraid of death?

SHEEN: It confused me deeply. I've always been a little skittish about death. On certain days I'm okay with it. On other days it's like, "Really? I have to? No, man, not me." It must be the biggest trip because they save it for last, right? Who the hell knows? I don't know what to expect. I mean, I'm not in any way religious. I don't go to church, but I consider myself spiritual.

PLAYBOY: Spiritual in that you think something happens to our souls after we die?

SHEEN: Yeah. But I'm not talking about a heaven in the clouds. I think it's all around us. I think it's here. I think we're still here in some different dimension. I think it's like gills. I don't know how else to describe it. I think it's like gills that you sort of slide through.

PLAYBOY: So it's not like ghosts? There are no dead relatives hanging around?

SHEEN: Hey, we're on a fucking rock flying 67,000 miles an hour through space, spinning on its own axis with a moon that won't go away, around a star that's burning out, and for some reason we're positioned perfectly. Anything's possible. Ghosts, sure, I've seen them. I've been in hotels with them.

PLAYBOY: Ghosts of people you know?

SHEEN: Sometimes. When my friend [*Wild Orchid* and *9 Weeks* writer] Zalman King died, I went to comfort his widow, Pat. We were making a toast, and I saw Zalman, who'd been dead for four hours, dance through the background. It was a trip. People are going to read this and go, "Pfft. More meds for Sheen." Whatever, man. I know what I saw. Another dear friend of mine, Stephanie, her father died. I was at her house, and he walked past me on the stairwell one day.

PLAYBOY: The ghost of Stephanie's dad?

SHEEN: Yep. I know it was him. I have no doubt. I'm not fucking high or experimenting with psychedelics and shit. I just accept stuff like that and don't try to figure it out. I saw these people, or their spirits or whatever, for a reason. I don't know what the reason is right now, but maybe it'll be revealed some other time.

PLAYBOY: Are you planning to grow old gracefully?

SHEEN: Nope, no way. Because I refuse to grow up. I won't become the adult guy.

PLAYBOY: But you can't stop old age from happening, unless you check out early.

SHEEN: I don't want that either.

PLAYBOY: Could you see yourself at 90 as the old guy whose life is pretty much over but who has the best stories?

SHEEN: That I'd be fine with. As long as I've got people I love who still want to hear my stories. It's all about the stories we can tell 20 years from now. That's been the good and bad of my life. I've been out with people who are like, "I've got to go home." And I'll say, "What's a better story in 20 years, that you went home and slept or this night continued?" And they're always like [sighs], "All right, I'll go." You can put people's feet to the fire a bit just by reminding them that we're constantly creating our own history.

PLAYBOY: Some of your stories probably sound like fiction.

SHEEN: I'm sure, yeah. Sometimes it feels like it all happened to somebody else. I'll read about it in a magazine and it's been run through this whole machine. It's processed and propagandized and skewed. And then it has this life of its own, in addition to what it might've actually been.

PLAYBOY: But when you're an old man surrounded by grandchildren, the only version they'll hear is yours.

SHEEN: Yeah, I guess that's true. I kind of like that romantic image of being in a rocker with my family gathered around, all these generations in one room, listening intently to my stories. "Tell us one more, Grandpa Sheen. Tell us about the time you got banned from the Radisson for putting a cheeseburger in the air-conditioning vent." And I'll be like, "Well, actually, there was a small fire involved too. But it's getting late, kids. It's almost six P.M. We'll pick this up tomorrow." [laughs] Yeah, I like that. [pauses and smiles] I think I'd be okay with that.

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JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2013 ISSUE NO.49

HAIRANDMAKEUPBYEDWINRAMOS/STYLEDBYVINCEFLORES/SHOOTONLOCATIONATTHEPALOALTOLEISUREANDRESIDENTIALESTATES,BARASRIZAL
SPECIAL THANKS TO MEGA EAST

WRITTEN BY MICHEL ANDRE' CONSTANT
PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANCO RAYMUNDO

an KRIZ HERNANDEZ effortless beauty

Simply elegant and beautiful: this is how Kriz wishes to be known as our Asian Beauty for January-February.

A vivacious young woman, ready and well-set to take on the challenges her budding modelling job brings to the fore in her life; Kriz grew up with a healthy respect for responsibility and hard work. Learning at a young tender age that the effort one puts in is what determines what they reap in reward; she eschews the hard-partying lifestyle that a woman with a career such as hers should rightly adhere to for the responsible, daily-grind life. Not that Kriz doesn't like or know how to have fun, she just knows that her work and her family comes first; quintessential traits of the modern Filipina woman and, it just so happens, PLAYBOY's Asian Beauties.

Imbued with a character of simplicity and level-headedness, Kriz has no grandiose dreams of stardom and great wealth. Her dreams are for her family, whom she wants to give a business of their own someday, and her modelling, which she, naturally, dreams of being successful and fulfilling. No bright lights and fancy cars for her, it's all about hard work and justly-earned rewards.

Kriz has no great expectations from the man who would dare to win her heart. What she wants is what every tender-hearted Filipina woman would like: a guy that would do all to make her and keep her happy; a gallant gentleman of a goodly amount of humour, wit, honesty, and kindness who would "love who I am. Love what I love."

PLAYBOY is proud to call Kriz our Asian Beauty for January-February. We should all be so blessed to have a woman with a simple want for the things that truly matter in their lives and nothing more.

“I like the simple things in life so I would like for my guy to be the same way. I would want him to love who I am. Love what I love.”

"Looking for a midnight noisemaker?"

DAX SHEPARD

DAX SHEPARD'S ROAD TO SUCCESS WASN'T AN EASY ONE — IT WAS FILLED WITH DAYS OF DRUGGED-OUT DEBAUCHERY AND SELF-INDULGENT SINS. YET, DESPITE ALL THESE CHALLENGES, HE HAS SHOWN THAT HE HAD THE STRENGTH AND RESILIENCE TO OVERCOME THEM. HE ALSO KEPT HIS SENSE OF HUMOR INTACT AND ATTRIBUTES HIS DISCIPLINE TO HAVING TO CONSCIOUSLY RESTRAIN HIMSELF FROM TOUCHING THE BAD STUFF.

DURING SHEPARD'S RECENT SIT-DOWN WITH PLAYBOY, HE TALKED ABOUT HIS DAYS PRE-SUCCESS AND PRE-ENGAGEMENT TO KRISTIN BELL; HIS RATHER ODD MAN-CRUSH ON BURT REYNOLDS; HOW ANOTHER HOLLYWOOD ICON TURNED HIM INTO A VEGAN; AND, HOW THE NEED FOR SPEED STILL FLOWS LIKE CRAZY IN HIS BLOOD. WHILE HE MAY NOT HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SOBER, CLEARLY, HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN FUNNY.

(BY LAUREN ACURANTES)

THE COMIC TURNED ACTOR (AND DRUGGED-OUT BAD BOY TURNED VEGAN GENTLEMAN) TALKS ABOUT HIS NEWFOUND MONOGAMY WITH KRISTEN BELL, HIS LIFE WITHOUT COCAINE AND BOOZE AND HIS NOT-SO-SECRET MAN CRUSH ON BURT REYNOLDS

BY DAVID HOCHMAN

Q1

PLAYBOY: Is success what you thought it would be?

SHEPARD: Oh God no, but it's impossible to know until you've had success that it doesn't alter your daily struggles. When I was a struggling Groundling, I thought if I had the life I have now I wouldn't have to brush my teeth anymore and could eat cupcakes all day. In fact, I have to do the same shit I've always had to do to not feel miserable, which is work out, journal, eat well, do something for somebody other than myself at some point every day—even if it's just the dogs, those little fuckers.

Q2

PLAYBOY: So was that really you driving like an outlaw in Hit & Run?

SHEPARD: One hundred percent. I'm from Detroit, and my life has been driving cars. In high school it was drag racing. Then I worked for GM because my mother had a company that put on big car shows for journalists. We'd rent out Michigan International Speedway, and I got tons and tons of seat time in these crazy cars that a 16-year-old should never be allowed to drive. I fucking love cars, and I've wanted to do a car-chase movie all my life.

Q3

PLAYBOY: Correct us again, but it also appears that your superhot, superfamous co-star and fiancée, Kristen Bell, was actually buckled in alongside you.

SHEPARD: For every bit of it. Naturally the producer had booked a stunt double, but Kristen said to me, "No. If you're driving through a barn and jumping other cars, I need to be in there with you. We're going to go out together."

Q4

PLAYBOY: She sounds like a keeper.

SHEPARD: Kristen's a good girl. She grew up very Christian, went straight to college, did great in school and started work immediately. She's charitable and philanthropic and rescues dogs. So when we met, our backgrounds were opposites. All the things I'd done were terrifying to her, and she had a hard time believing I would ever be able to stay married and monogamous and a father and all those things. For the first year and a half we were together that was what we battled over almost weekly.

Q5

PLAYBOY: How terrifying were you exactly?

SHEPARD: It's so weird when you turn 18 and are released into the world and then just start piling on terrible habits. From 18 to 29 I was a heavy smoker, heavy drinker, drug addict, terrible eater and philanderer. The past eight years, since I got sober, have honestly been about trying to peel back each of those habits, to get back to the 12-year-old kid inside who was tremendously excited about life.

Q6

PLAYBOY: Give us a snapshot of you in your party years.

SHEPARD: I just loved to get fucked-up—drinking, cocaine, opiates, marijuana, diet pills, pain pills, everything. Mostly my love was Jack Daniel's and cocaine. I was famous for going out on Thursday night to have a couple of beers, and that just led all the way to Saturday night. I would meet people here and there, and then I'd be in a hotel room with four strangers. Oh, they're tapping out? Well, someone new showed up. Well, what's your name? Yeah, I'd love to go dancing. I lived for going down the rabbit hole of meeting weird

brembo

people. Of course, come Monday I would be tallying up all the different situations, and each one was progressively more dangerous. I got lucky in that I didn't go to jail.

Q7

PLAYBOY: Or worse.

SHEPARD: Oh God, yeah. My nose is completely sideways from a drunken altercation. I'm missing a knuckle because of a drunken altercation. Somehow I was usually able to get sober for work. I got sober for my first movie, Without a Paddle, but then I was fucked-up. I got sober for Idiocracy, but then I was fucked-up for three months. Then, right before I started Zathura, I knew I would get sober for that, so I went to Hawaii to relax, and that's when things went from bad to worse. I ended up in a car accident with a local on the way to get coke, which didn't stop us from going to get coke. Then it wasn't coke, it was crystal meth, but I did it anyway.

Q8

PLAYBOY: How exactly did you get a big -Hollywood career?

SHEPARD: Well, I spent many, many years unemployed. I was 20 when I moved to Los Angeles. I went on probably 600 commercial auditions and couldn't book any of them. I went through the Groundlings. Everyone there had agents but me, and it was a ridiculously amazing group. I was there with Melissa McCarthy, who was nominated for an Oscar; Octavia Spencer, who won an Oscar; Tate Taylor, who directed The Help. Success is just a war of attrition. Sure, there's an element of talent you should probably possess, but if you stick around long enough, eventually something is going to happen, you know?

Q9

PLAYBOY: You first got people's attention as the pretend IRS agent who made Justin Timberlake cry on MTV's Punk'd. What was that like?

SHEPARD: Because J.T. was such a marquee name, MTV was nervous I would fuck up the bit and we'd have nothing to show for it. His garage was packed full of MTV brass telling me what to do. I wasn't nervous; it was pure adrenaline. What made Punk'd such a golden opportunity was that once the person arrived, I was directing the show. No one could yell "Cut" or tell me I was going too far. I don't think I would have popped on a format other than that. You know right out of the gate.

Q10

PLAYBOY: You studied anthropology at UCLA. What's your anthropological assessment of Ashton Kutcher's success?

SHEPARD: We are incredibly social animals, and we're constantly searching for some order of who's alpha, who's beta, who's zeta. Ashton's definitely an alpha. People want to dislike him because he's gorgeous and successful. It's fair to hate somebody like that. I relate. If he wasn't a crazy, driven, hard worker, I would find it all offensive. But he's like Tyler Perry. How do you not respect Tyler Perry? It's easy to make jokes about the guy, but he writes, directs and stars on a TV show, then writes, directs and stars in a movie all in one year. And certainly, once you get to actually know somebody, it demystifies them and everything they go through. When Ashton and Demi broke up, I felt bad. These are people I eat dinner with. Brad and Angelina, that's another story. I don't actually know them, so I'm as curious as the next person: Will they get married? What's their life like? And of course I would love to see them engaged in coitus.

Q11

PLAYBOY: You realize people have said that about you and every famous beautiful woman you've dated—Kristen, Kate -Hudson, Ione Skye.

SHEPARD: I get that. People want to see us bang. But here's the funny thing about the response I've been aware of to my dating famous people: It's been very negative. I'm either not good-looking enough, not a good enough actor or not successful enough for these people. It's ironic, really. Guys should be excited that I got Kristen Bell. If Brad Pitt gets Kristen Bell, it's like, "Well, of course he did." With me, it should be, "Oh good, a normal-looking guy got her. Maybe I'll get me a Kristen Bell." But guys hate my guts for always dating women I have no right to be with.

Q12

PLAYBOY: What's your secret?

SHEPARD: I attribute it to being funny and a good dancer. And I'm tall, which will get you places as well. I'm also wired for it. The times my brain works fastest are when I'm doing improv on a stage or meeting coeds in a bar.

Q13

PLAYBOY: You picked a career in which you're surrounded by gorgeous women. Does the urge to merge ever go away?

SHEPARD: No, it doesn't. I wish it did, magically. This is overly deep, but I have to put women in the same category I put drugs and alcohol. It's an outside thing that I try to use to make my insides feel better, and I have learned that it just doesn't work. I have to keep my urges in check.

Q14

PLAYBOY: What's your relationship like with Craig T. Nelson, your TV dad on Parenthood?

SHEPARD: Craig T. Nelson is the closest person I've met to my identical twin, only we're separated by 30 years or whatever. He raced cars forever. We both have big noses, we're both tall, we're both goofy, we've both been around a lot of craziness. He's a guy I super-fan at work the way I super-fan Burt Reynolds, whom I got to work with on Without a Paddle.

Q15

PLAYBOY: Burt Reynolds?

SHEPARD: All the way. My house is a living shrine to Burt, much to K.B.'s chagrin. I have a urinal, and above it is a poster of Gator with a personal message that says, "To Dax, you're a hell of an actor but more important, a hell of a man. Love and respect." I would go to his trailer every day just to hound him for stories because I had so many unanswered questions. Like, Jackie Gleason was a very well-known and admitted functioning alcoholic, yet 80 percent of Smokey and the Bandit is him traveling at high speed. It's clearly him driving, and it begs the question: What were the safety protocols when Gleason was driving? Burt's answers were implausible. The physics of what he told me couldn't happen, but who gives a shit? They were great stories. I love that man.

Q16

PLAYBOY: Did you feel that way about John Travolta when you were in Old Dogs?

SHEPARD: Well, they say you shouldn't meet your heroes, and that's probably good advice unless you employ the strategy of hanging on to your daydream of who they are. Urban Cowboy is in my top five dramas of all time, so Travolta could have been lighting other cast members on fire and I would have just seen Bud climbing off the oil rig, or the guy from Pulp Fiction. I'm like those female fans who saw Elvis on his last tour. They didn't see the 300-pound beached whale on the stage; they were cheering and crying for the guy from 1956 swaying his hips.

Q17

PLAYBOY: Beau Bridges looks pretty good in your new movie, and he's no spring chicken. What was he like?

SHEPARD: When I saw his age was 70, I almost crapped myself. I would go, "Jesus, Beau, you're not supposed to be able to punch somebody out in a scene at 70. My grandpa couldn't have done that. What's your secret?" And he goes, "I've been a vegan for 12 years." I was like, Damn, I need to think about this. And then I saw Forks Over Knives, that documentary, and I was like, I'm in. I've been a vegan since January.

Q18

PLAYBOY: And how are you feeling?

SHEPARD: It's nothing like the pill in The Matrix but damn good, like 15 percent across the board in every respect. I sleep 15 percent better. My allergies are at least 15 percent better. I have fewer body aches. My skin looks better. I'm never starving, and I never need to ride the couch feeling completely full and disgusting.

Q19

PLAYBOY: So your vices are pretty much under control?

SHEPARD: I think I have a pretty good handle on my "isms," but it takes a long time. Each third or fourth bad thing you give up, you still have to hold on to one. I'm still on nicotine. I pound about a dozen of those Commit throat lozenges a day. I still drink gallons of coffee.

Q20

PLAYBOY: And you still drive like a maniac.

SHEPARD: I'm still super into driving too fast on motorcycles, yes. I have a Suzuki GSX-R1000 that's just for the racetrack, and I can get up to 190 on that. When you're going that fast, you're thinking only about what you're doing in the moment. It's the closest I could ever get to Deepak or God or something like that. You can't think about tomorrow or what happened yesterday. You just absolutely have to be thinking second to second to second about what you're doing in that moment. I don't think I could survive without doing something like that.

ISSUE NO.49

PLAYGROUND

GEARBOX.FOOD & BEVERAGE.ESTABLISHMENT.WELLNESS.SPORTS.TRAVEL

WHETHER YOU'RE GUNNING FOR PURE SPEED, GREEN INNOVATION, NEW TECHNOLOGY OR CHEAP THRILLS, THERE'S A FINE NEW MACHINE OUT THERE FOR YOU.

BY JON GANCAYCO, A.J. BAIME, KEN GROSS AND THE EDITORS OF PLAYBOY

If the Philippines were to be described during the year 2012, it would be that the country was ignited. For the first time in years, the country was not portrayed to be in turmoil. Rather, the media always had something positive and "more fun" to report thanks to our accomplishments and overall improvement. Journalists all over the world had repeatedly mentioned that our country was indeed, to be the next big investment hub as it is now on its way to becoming a fully fledged tiger. This was even capped off when a 7.1% 3rd quarter GDP growth was announced. Has the yellow ribbon successfully transformed itself from just from being a symbol of change into a symbol of prosperity? We sure think so, as a lot of these successes were translated to the local automobile industry.

A New Year means new things to look up to and yearn for. And because most people's pockets are getting deeper, so are the vehicle line-ups of every brand. Never in history did we experience faster and bulkier shipments to our shores and the New Year will definitely have something better to prove this. In fact, 2013 also marks the local re-entry of two of the most recognized automobile brands in Europe: Peugeot and Volkswagen.

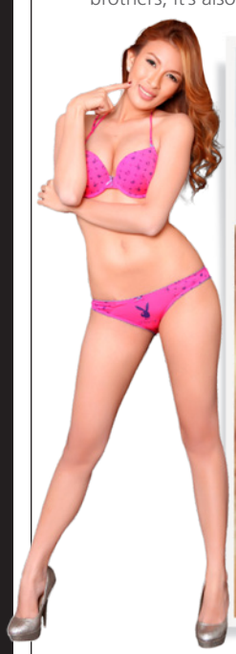
Whether you're gunning for pure speed, green innovation, new technology or cheap thrills, there's a fine new machine out there for you. Toyota and Honda are roaring back. The Koreans Hyundai and Kia are number 2 and number 3 respectively in the Philippines. Detroit is dynamite, producing some of the best cars in its history. Porsche, Benz and BMW still set the standards, while a slim 1 ½ million pesos will get you a spirited, rear-drive Japanese sports coupe. And then there's all that new exotic metal—McLaren. We drove them all hard. Here are Playboy's best of the best international selections for the New Year.

MERCEDES-BENZ SL550 *Hottest Roadster*

Since the SL's debut in 1956, not every generation has won our hearts. But the latest SL550 is a trim bolide with an all-aluminum body, tons of power and tire-melting torque. The car constantly reminds you how fast and smart it is. Corner at speed and your seat curls to cup you against the g-force. The headrests' Airscarf feature keeps your neck warm, and the "magic sky" hard-top roof changes from clear to dark tint with the touch of a button. Then there's the speed. Don't forget to hold on to your driver's license. When you purchase an SL, you instantly inherit more than 100 years of Mercedes-Benz development. If you have endless millions, go for the 45th anniversary SL65 AMG version (pictured) armed with 630 horsepower.

There's a slightly tamer version in the SL 500 available for purchase from our local Mercedes distributors, CATS (with boutique stores in EDSA Greenhills and Global City). Expect a friendlier price upon application. But like its hungrier brothers, it's also equipped with a V8.

STATS
ENGINE 4.6-LITER TWIN-TURBO V8
HORSEPOWER 429
ZERO TO 60 4.1 SECONDS
MPG 16 CITY, 25 HIGHWAY



LAND ROVER RANGE ROVER *Best SUV*

It's no secret, nor do we have to remind everyone that Land Rover produces the best SUVs in the world. Well, the best just got better. The fourth-gen Range Rover is completely revamped, with an SUV-first all-aluminum body that saves 700 pounds, its panels bonded (not bolted or welded) like on aircraft. Flood? Trips to Sagada? The Rover's computer automatically selects the optimum all-wheel-drive setup so you can put horsepower to the ground. More refinement, a larger interior, an eight-speed automatic.

Land Rovers are distributed by the Jaguar Philippines group, headed by Mr. Wellington Soong along with other luxury brands Maserati, Ferrari and of course, Jaguar (showroom located in Global City). Should you choose to invest in a Range Rover, we won't hide its price at PHP 8,700,000. HID headlights, Leather Seats, Excellent Surround Sound. 4.4L displacement on V8 engine powered by Diesel fuel. We're out of room: It's the ultimate SUV.

STATS
ENGINE FIVE-LITER V8
HORSEPOWER 375
ZERO TO 60 6.5 SECONDS
MPG 13 CITY, 18 HIGHWAY

STATS
ENGINE 4.4-LITER TWIN-TURBO V8
HORSEPOWER 560
ZERO TO 60 3.7 SECONDS
MPG 15 CITY, 22 HIGHWAY

BMW M5 *Slickest Sports Sedan*

The car you see above is highly anticipated. The M5 is the standard-bearer for asphalt-devouring, full-size sport sedans, a machine that can chariot you to the office in a style and outclass just about anything on the wide traffic on Sundays. So much thought went into this automobile, from its uniquely crafted twin-turbo V8 (which looks like some wildly imagined atom splitter) to its highly intuitive nav system (a child could figure it out). Of course the M in M5 stands for BMW's legendary motorsport division. You have 560 horsepower, crisp steering, killer braking power, a standard seven-speed paddle shifter and—for a car that weighs well over 4,000 pounds—remarkable agility. The autorati quibbled about how the engine noise gets piped through the stereo speakers. Who the hell cares? The mighty M5 strikes again.

The M5 has a displacement of 4.4L powered by a V8 engine. The leather seats and 20 inch alloy wheels are mandatory furnishings. Time to become a power daddy. All of these and more at an unforgiving price of Php 10,990,000.00. Retirement funds and savings, probably?

Should you find the M5 too incredible, BMW Philippines offers more "normal" 5-series packages to the country's top execs. There's the 520d at PHP 4,900,000; the 523i at PHP 5,390,000; the 528i at PHP 5,900,000 and top of the line 530d at PHP 6,390,000.

STATS
ENGINE ELECTRIC MOTOR
HORSEPOWER 100
ZERO TO 60 8.4 SECONDS
MPGE 118 COMBINED CITY-HIGHWAY

Two years ago, Honda Philippines announced that 2013 will be the year that they will bring in their first hybrid. The Civic Hybrid was definitely a candidate but it looks like Honda will start with the 5-door format Filipinos are more familiar with.

Leave it to Honda to solve the conundrum of the small electric car. Locally called the Jazz, the plug-in, all-electric Fit EV is a curiously stylish little thing. Honda claims an 82-mile combined city-highway-range equivalent. A superquick three-hour 240-volt charging time means you can go from an empty to a full battery faster than you can watch a Harry Potter film. The battery pack under the floor adds a few hundred pounds, but it helps cornering stability.

Expect limited availability in 2013. But in case your hands are already too hot for a Hybrid, we suggest still checking FIT EV's competition, the Toyota Prius. The Prius sells its standard version at PHP 1,475,000 and the full version at PHP 1,520,000. When it comes around, the FIT EV's pricing scheme should go far from its rival.

HONDA FIT EV *Ace Electric*

STATS
ENGINE TWO-LITER FLAT FOUR
HORSEPOWER 200
ZERO TO 60 6.4 SECONDS
BRZ 6.2 SECONDS FR-S
MPG 22 CITY, 30 HIGHWAY

SUBARU BRZ, SCION *Bang for Buck*

Subaru and Toyota have teamed up to offer a pair of virtually identical sports coupes, saving each company a bundle on development and giving enthusiasts a pair of affordable, stylish rear-drive Japanese GTs. Locally, Toyota took the first step in bringing in the "86" in the market and so far, it's been well-received. All models feature 2.0L Displacement. A manual version for the enthusiast is available at a reasonable PHP 1,550,000 while its automatic version is at a hundred grand more. The top of the line Aero with all the exterior and interior add-ons can be purchased at PHP 1,860,000.

By the time this article is published, the BRZ should also be present in the Subaru showrooms. Both cars feature a Subaru four-cylinder, front-mounted amidships for near-perfect weight distribution. While both cars can thank Toyota for their D-4S dual direct port injection system, differences in suspension tuning and trim are noticeable. So is the sticker. The Scooby is a tad more expensive because its nav system, Bluetooth, and upmarket interior are standard. Either way, these are pure fun, like Japanese sports coupes of yore. Flick off stability control and you're in drift heaven.

CAMARO ZL1
ENGINE 6.2-LITER SUPERCHARGED V8
HORSEPOWER 580 ZERO TO 60 3.9 SECONDS
MPG 14 CITY, 19 HIGHWAY CAMARO ZL1

SHELBY MUSTANG GT500
ENGINE 5.8-LITER SUPERCHARGED V8
HORSEPOWER 662 ZERO TO 60 3.5 SECONDS
MPG 15 CITY, 24 HIGHWAY

CAMARO ZL1 VS. SHELBY MUSTANG GT500 *American Muscle*

For decades Chevy's Camaro and Ford's Mustang have stockpiled horsepower and battled for all-American muscle car supremacy. Both companies released their most extreme examples ever in recent months. Like the Mustang, this Camaro pulls its moniker, ZL1, from a 1960s legend. Like the Mustang, its numbers boggle the mind: 580 horsepower, 556 foot-pounds of torque. What sets them apart from each other? Styling, for one. The Ford is old-school badass. The Chevy looks like the Batmobile out of the next caped-crusader blockbuster. And then there's performance. Both deliver direct injections of adrenaline through your breastplate, but for us, the Camaro offers a slightly more compliant ride in city traffic—with less chance of getting to work with your nerves shredded on the floor mat.

The ZL1 version is not available in our shores yet. But Chevrolet was brave enough to bring the first muscle car. The basic Camaro starts with a 3.6L AT version purchasable at PHP 3,218, 888. The Camaro's SS version is also available at PHP 4,138,888 for the die-hard fan. A big caution to everyone as it nurses a whopping 6.2L engine!

Ford's most powerful Mustang carries the badge of Carroll Shelby, who died in 2012. There are only a select few who appreciates the beauty and heritage a muscle car has. For one, it's tough to afford and maintain. But as one reviewer put it, "It is…absolutely insane that Ford is setting this car loose on the American public." It turns out, however, this Shelby is drivable, refined even, on city streets.

Unfortunately, the Shelby is as of now, just available through independent dealers. But the basic variants that come with a 3.7 aluminum block V6 are available at just PHP 2,499,000, a far cry from its Chevy rival.

MAZDA SPEED 3 *Responsible Ride*

STATS - ENGINE 2.3-LITER TURBO I-4 HORSEPOWER 263 ZERO TO 60 6.5 SECONDS MPG 18 CITY, 25 HIGHWAY

For those in need of a snappy hatchback that's quick on its feet, has room for five, and sports a price tag that doesn't read like a long-distance phone number, this ride's for you. More locally known as the "3", Mazda has tossed it all in: 18-inch wheels, 280 foot-pounds of torque, 42.8 cubic feet of hauling space, great braking with ABS and a slick-shifting six-speed. Niceties include a 10-speaker Bose surround-sound audio system.

Unfortunately, its first years in the local scenery did not play out as originally projected. But a new year, new strategy and upgraded features might just turn things around for 2013. After all, its predecessor is still one of the most loved vehicles on the road driven by all types of Filipinos. The new 3's body is slightly larger with a more modern architecture. It's initially equipped with a high-efficiency 2.0L engine—which is something the local group should address because the public demands a lower displacement. Just like the former 3's "Saucy" reputation, the new 3 takes it a notch higher by showcasing an even more stylish and well equipped interior and of course, the classy exterior.

The trims are as follows: The (featured) Mazda 3 5-door hatchback with a 1.6V displacement is sold at PHP 1,099,000; The 4-door sedan 1.6 V is at PHP 999,000; the top-of-the-line 2.0 R is at PHP 1,299,000. Mazda may have a hard time competing when it boils down to the price. But spending a little more for a good-looking 3 is worth it.

MCLAREN MP4-12C *Hottest Exotic*

The triple A socio-economic class seem to be more aggressive in purchasing exotic super cars nowadays. With the entry of Lamborghini by PGA and a more solid distribution of Ferrari, those exotics can more often than not spotted in our streets.

Enter McLaren, the next brand in line. It has taken its decades of Formula One–winning experience to build a racer for the street that's truly the easiest car to drive scary-fast we've ever experienced. It's close to docile in traffic but transforms into an animal on a racetrack. Time to geek out: A strong carbon-fiber tub forms a stiff foundation to support a semi-active hydraulic suspension system, a seven-speed dual-clutch transmission and a low-mid-mounted V8 that performs almost like an electric motor in its smooth power delivery. Bonus: electronic launch control. The car feels like an extension of your mind. You will it to perform, and it responds faster than you thought possible.

Interested? Find an importer YOU CAN TRUST. Make sure the papers are checked by your lawyer and you pay its taxes properly.

STATS - ENGINE 3.8-LITER TWIN-TURBO V8 HORSEPOWER 616 ZERO TO 60 3.1 SECONDS MPG 15 CITY, 24 HIGHWAY

PLAYBOY'S PICK THE ALL-NEW SEVENTH GENERATION

Porsche 911

STATS
ENGINE 3.4-LITER FLAT SIX
HORSEPOWER 350
ZERO TO 60 4.6 SECONDS
MPG 19 CITY, 27 HIGHWAY

Imagine a girlfriend who will be whatever you want, whenever you want—sexy, chill, an Olympian who can outpace Usain Bolt—and always exquisite. That's the new seventh-generation 911. Porsche engineers have continued to improve this car since its debut in 1963. The latest has an impossibly sexy figure (two inches longer, two inches wider, a perfectly balanced roofline). But the real key is its remarkable electronic voodoo. In comfort mode, the ride is buttery smooth, the mileage impressive, the leather ultraluxe. All that's missing is a dozen oysters on a bed of ice. Switch drive mode to sport plus, stiffen the suspension, lift the spoiler and open the exhaust (all in seconds with a few buttons), and you have a 179-mph racing car that will take all you can give it. The 911's lightning-quick PDK transmission crackles like an F1 car's, the tight steering railroads you through corners, and your feet stay planted. Could any other car be more elegant, so racy—and still cost under a hundred grand? Considering its entire oeuvre, the Porsche 911 is the greatest sports car of all time, and its new iteration is Playboy's 2013 Car of the Year.

Porsche is distributed by PGA Cars, the same group behind Audi Philippines. It's good to know that there is a wide range of 911 variants to choose from. These range from the Cabriolet versions all the way to the flagship GT versions. The "cheapest" 911 Carrera is already priced at Php 7,400,000.00 while the very iconic GT2 is at Php 19,000,000.00.

HIDDEN DELIGHTS

WORDS BY SKY AISURU
PHOTOS BY JEFF INFANTE

Looking for a quiet place in Manila is quite impossible. Finding a quiet place with good food is another thing. Our new great find is Tiyo's - this homey restaurant in Marikina by Chef and Brewer that will tickle your fancy taste buds and make you shout, "Eureka!" especially for those who are looking for an eating place with great food.

PORK BELLY CRACKLING

The restaurant's take on pork binagoongan is definitely the meal to jumpstart your whole year. The best part in this dish is that the pork is cooked slowly to render the fat and make the meat soft before it is deep-fried to make the skin very crispy. Pork Belly Crackling has the complete resume of a good Filipino dish. Cradled in the middle of the rice molded into a double-deck layer is everyone's favorite eggplant ensalada with chopped fresh tomatoes and shrimp paste.

ROLLETAS

The Rolletas is a special pita bread stuffed with either chicken or pork shreds topped with some veggies to serve as your healthy choice on their list of appetizers. It is served with a light mustard dressing on the side.

SAMURAI PIZZA

A must-try bestseller for anyone eating at Tiyo's. A fusion of Italian and Japanese tastes all in one bite of Samurai Pizza with its California Maki topping covered with a yummy wasabi paste on a crunchy thin crust pizza.

COSMOPOLITAN

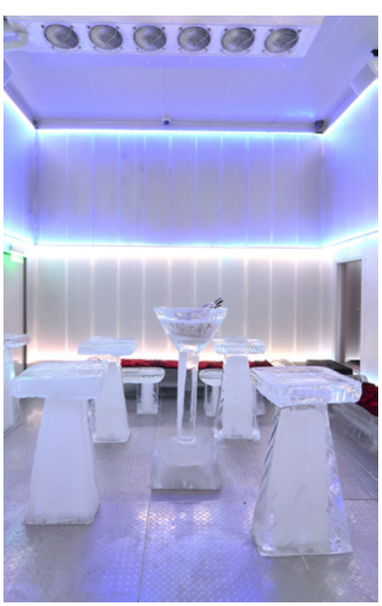
Bigger than the usual serving we know, Tiyo's Cosmopolitan drink is smooth and is as fresh as it could get. But don't get fooled by its ladies-drink look, the Cosmopolitan here has some heady kick. Definitely, a drink for those independent women.

Try these dishes at ***Tiyo's by Chef & Brewer*** on Almond Nut St. in Marikina City.

THE HOTTEST COLD PLACE TO BE!

From the dynamic group behind numerous successful establishments such as Opus, Eden Nightclub, Venom Shooters Bar, Izakaya, Draft Gastro Pub, Beso, and The Distillery comes another sensory party environment where one can experience a hot, heart-pumping party and negative zero-degree environment at the same time. This is another innovative watering hole that will definitely take one's breath away.

The Imperial Ice Bar is a Russian-inspired bar located at the Fort Strip. It is divided into two parts: the Main Lounge, which features a state-of-the-art sound system with some of Manila's top DJs playing daily; and, the Ice Room which is the only authentic Ice Bar in the country that has an average temperature of -5 degrees Celsius with everything in its interior – from the bar, to the tables and seats, the décor and even the shot glasses – made out of ice. Not only is the bar great for picture-taking with your friends, it also serves premium Imperial Russian Vodka fruit-infused drinks specially concocted by New York star mixologist David Dennis. The imperial Ice Bar can definitely make you forget that we're in a tropical country like the Philippines.



HAVE A THING FOR SWASHBUCKLING?

WORDS BY RAP HERNANDEZ

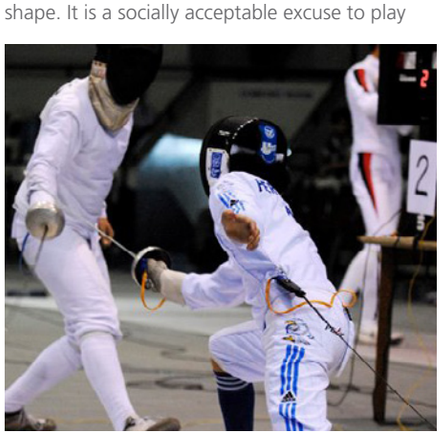
Always been a fan of Zorro? Always fancied yourself as today's D'Artagnan? Or do you simply have a thing for playing with swords? Why not try fencing as a sport to get fit.

Photo courtesy of Columbia Pictures (The Legend of Zorro)

Historically, fencing was practiced all throughout Europe and was a way of settling disputes through duelling between gentlemen. The sport takes it roots from Spain where it began in the mid-1400s. Since then it has spread around the world, became a sport, and was accepted as one of the main events in the Olympic Games.

Olympic fencing is sub-divided into three categories based on the weapons used; foil, epee and saber. Scoring in these categories depends on how the swords are used and the parts of the body targeted to obtain a point. Foil and epee are both thrusting weapons and only allow stabbing motions. Foils restrict a fencer's target to the torso while the epee allows hits anywhere in the body. The saber, the only weapon that allows slashing, targets any part of a fencer's body above the waist. One thing in common between the different swords is the regal sword-play fencing involves. The constant exchange of blows that we often enjoy in movies is a unique fencing trait.

Today, fencing has evolved from a gentleman's activity to a sport into a fitness exercise. Fencing has long been an excellent sport for people who wish to become fit and strong. Its high demands on athletes keep their mind and body in tip-top shape. It is a socially acceptable excuse to play around with swords, making it a great exercise. Many professional athletes and famous celebrities actually fence as part of their workouts. The A-list celebrities who are known to do so are Angelina Jolie, Will Smith, Tom Cruise, and David Beckham.



So, how does one get fit by fencing?

If you watch an official fencing match, you will notice that fencers perform constant bursts of movement. They typically do not maintain paces and shy away from any rhythmic motion. Sudden stops and sudden movements are a favorite for most fencers and this makes the sport more taxing on a person's stamina. So, if you're an avid fencer you will easily develop the endurance to play.

Fencing also has a heavy stress on a person's hand-eye coordination. The sport allows you to develop your reflexes, meaning how your hand will react and move will be based on what you see. While most martial arts enthusiasts develop their strong hand movements, fencing allows sword handlers to work well at manipulating their weapons on instinct.

Though the constant exertion of physical effort will help in developing strength and speed, fencing poses a greater strain on a person's mental prowess. In this sport, it's not always the faster and stronger who wins. It is a mind game – players have to outthink one another and formulate the best way to overcome their opponent. A stronger and faster fencer will not always win if he cannot outthink an opponent. Fencing is a thinking game. Fencers need to process their actions and move instantaneously.

So, despite appearing as an easy sport, fencing is actually very physically demanding. You need fast reflexes, excellent coordination, stamina and, above all, a sharp mind. It is a contact sport. It may be less punishing than other martial arts but this is still a sport where you go one on one against another man with a sword.

So, want to try a new workout fitness program? Try fencing. It is highly recommended to anyone who wishes to get in shape or simply have fun with a sword.

JUMPSTART TO WELLNESS

WORDS BY SKY AISURU

TIP #1

HAVE A PLAN

HAVING A PLAN AND KNOWING WHAT NUMBERS YOU WANT ON THE SCALE IS THE START OF LIVING HEALTHY. YOU WILL ALSO GET TO SEE WHAT EXACTLY IT IS THAT YOU ARE DOING IN AN UNHEALTHY WAY AND FROM THERE, YOU WILL KNOW WHAT EXERCISE ROUTINES AND DIET FITS YOU MORE.

TIP #2

CLEAN UP YOUR KITCHEN

YOUR ABS WILL COME FROM 30% GYM AND 70% HEALTHY EATING. SPENDING A DAY IN THE KITCHEN JUST TO TAKE AWAY THE BAD AND REPLACE IT WITH HEALTHIER AND GREENER SNACKS WILL GIVE YOU THE JUMPSTART THAT YOU NEED.

TIP #3

BURN WALK

WALKING IS A VERY HEALTHY CHOICE THAT DOESN'T EVEN REQUIRE YOU TO BE ON YOUR RUNNING SHOES. INSTEAD OF TAKING A CAB TO A NEARBY MALL, PUT ON YOUR SUNNIES AND ENJOY THE WALK. NOT ONLY DOES IT HELP YOUR BODY TO BE HEALTHY, BUT IT CAN ALSO GIVE YOU THE MENTAL REST YOU NEED.

TIP #4

SWITCH TO TEA

BESIDES HAVING LESS CAFFEINE AND ALMOST NO CARBOHYDRATES, FATS, OR PROTEIN, TEA IS A NATURAL DIGESTIVE AID THAT HELPS YOU EASILY FLUSH DOWN FOOD. IT ALSO DECREASES FATTY ACIDS IN YOUR BLOODSTREAM WHILE COFFEE CAN INCREASE YOUR CHOLESTEROL LEVEL BECAUSE OF THE CHEMICAL IT CONTAINS CALLED CAFESTOL..

TIP #5

DRINK LESS ALCOHOL

NOT ONLY DOES IT BREAK DOWN YOUR LIVER, DRINKING ALCOHOL ALSO STOPS YOU FROM BURNING FAT. ALTHOUGH YOU DO NOT GAIN WEIGHT FROM ALCOHOL ITSELF, IMBIBING IT CAUSES WEIGHT GAIN BECAUSE IT USES LESS OF YOUR BODY SUGAR AS YOUR BODY NOW EMPLOYS THE ALCOHOL FOR ENERGY INSTEAD. ALCOHOL ALSO CAUSES DISORDERS IN THE HORMONE FUNCTION WHICH CAN FURTHER HAMPER FITNESS.

TIP #6

DROP THE BREAD

JUST BECAUSE IT HAS LETTUCE MEANS IT'S HEALTHY. SINCE BREAD (ESPECIALLY WHITE) DIGESTS FASTER THAN OTHER CARBS, THERE ARE A LOT OF NUTRIENTS INSIDE THAT COULD SLOW DOWN DIGESTION. AFTER IT BECOMES SUGAR IN OUR BLOODSTREAM, THERE IS AN INCREASED LEVEL IN INSULIN IN YOUR SYSTEM AND YOU WILL GET HUNGRY FASTER. TRY TO CUT DOWN ON YOUR BREAD FOR A WEEK AND SEE RESULTS.

TIP #7

REST

GETTING A REGULAR SLEEPING ROUTINE INCREASES WEIGHT LOSS AND ALSO REDUCES HEART DISEASE. SLEEPING LESS MAKES YOU FEEL TIRED AND HAVE A CRAVING FOR A SNACK ON SUGARY FOODS. IF YOU ARE HITTING THE GYM, HAVING ENOUGH SLEEP IS VITAL TO SPEED UP TISSUE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH.

BORACAY NEVER SLEEPS

GUIDE ON WHERE TO GO AND WHAT TO DO, FROM MORNING UNTIL DAWN.

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARCO MANZONI

NOWADAYS, WITH NEARLY ONE MILLION VISITORS A YEAR PLUS THE COUNTLESS NEW ESTABLISHMENTS OPENING EVERY MONTH, TOURISTS WHO COME TO BORACAY FOR THE FIRST TIME MIGHT FEEL A BIT LOST. Probably because a majority of them prefer to remain in the crowded strip of sand between Station 1 and Station 2 along White Beach. But the beauty and uniqueness of Boracay is not just found on White Beach. The whole island is an amazing celebration of nature – full of pristine, sandy, quiet beaches and hidden coves, all worth visiting and explored for a swim, a good meal, or a crazy full moon party. When in Boracay, remember that the residents here know where the "good stuff" can be found. So, if you want to make the most out of your vacation, ask one of the locals, or just read my guide below to know where to go and what to do, from morning until dawn, for an incredible Boracay experience!

MORNING

What to do on Boracay when you wake up? Grab your kite and board and go to **Bulabog Beach**! On this gorgeous, powdery, tranquil beach located on the eastern part of the island, you can still find the "old" cozy Boracay atmosphere – quieter, with stable onshore winds that make it one of the world's best kitesurfing places! Learning to kitesurf here is very easy because of the calm waters and safe, consistent winds that blow from the northeast most of the year. Bulabog Beach is also the preferred Asian spot for many world-class water sports competitions that features international world champions –, a true must see if you haven't been there before!

GRAB YOUR KITE AND BOARD AND GO TO **BULABOG BEACH!**

NOON

Lunchtime! After all morning on the board, the best place to eat is at **Happy Home**, right in the centre of Bulabog Beach. The place is very cozy and environmentally- friendly, with good, reasonably-priced meals. For those who prefer having lunch on White Beach, I recommend **Angol**, after Station 3, at the southern end of White Beach.You can also still eat freshly- grilled fish in the small, native restaurants. After lunch, you can walk to the small bay of Rocky Beach, reachable from White Beach by walking through a tunnel naturally excavated in the mountain. **Rocky Beach** is one of the few secluded spots of Boracay, where locals normally go to find a break from the crowd. A true gem of a place for a cozy after a lunch fiesta underneath a coconut tree.

HOW TO GET HERE:

VIA KALIBO AIRPORT

>> 2-hour drive to Caticlan Jetty Port
>> 30-minute boat ride to the island

VIA CATICLAN AIRPORT

>> 10-minute tricycle ride
>> 30-minute boat ride to the island

WHEN IN BORACAY, REMEMBER THAT THE RESIDENTS HERE KNOW WHERE THE "GOOD STUFF" CAN BE FOUND.

EVENING

After sunset, don't sail back to White Beach! instead, ask the skipper to take you to **Baling-hai Beach Resort**, a secluded, pristine cove reachable by boat where you'll be served the best grilled food on the Island in a magical atmosphere of candle and firelight. Baling Hai is the ultimate experience for beach lovers and definitely a must-try for those seeking that unique spark that only a tropical island can offer. In my opinion, this might as well the best place to pop those magic words and pull out that engagement ring. After dinner, guests can be brought back by car to White Beach where, while waiting for the night to start, the best activity to do (which is very popular among the locals) is sipping a good cup of brewed coffee while people-watching. The best place in town for that is **Café del Sol**, located at the Front Beach of D'Mall. Here, while sitting with your feet immersed in the famous powdery sand of White Beach, you can see and be seen in the poshiest spot of Boracay until the parties start.

THE BEST ACTIVITY TO DO IS SIPPING A GOOD CUP OF **COFFEE** WHILE PEOPLE-WATCHING.

NIGHT

Boracay offers an amazing variety of night activities, for any taste, age and budget. I personally prefer going to places with less tourists, where I can hang out with friends and maybe play some billiards. **Exit Bar**, next to Red Coconut, is a popular hangout for residents and kite surfers. The place is famous for its early parties and live tribal drum sounds. After hanging out at Exit, the recently-renewed **Summer Place** is also a good option to dance with good music, a big stage and great vibes. For those who want the best drinks, **Juice Bar** is a must place to visit to taste their signature cocktails and see their acrobatic bar tending. A more stylish hangout with a large beach club can be found in **Epic**, found on the best location of the Island.

FOR THOSE WHO WANT THE BEST DRINKS, **JUICE BAR** IS A MUST PLACE TO VISIT

AFTERNOON

Afternoons in Boracay shine with the most beautiful natural light. The sky and the sun here, have very unique colours more than in any tropical paradise I've been to. And every day tourists can experience magical shows of shadows and lights that reach its apotheosis with those **breath-taking sunsets** like those you see in many famous postcards. The best way to enjoy a romantic afternoon with a front seat to one of those magic sunsets is to rent a **Paraw**, a typical Visayan sailboat that comfortably accommodates up to four persons. The uniqueness of a Boracay sunset should be experienced from the ocean on a boat. It is a priceless experience everybody should try at least once!

THE BEST WAY TO ENJOY A ROMANTIC AFTERNOON WITH A FRONT SEAT TO ONE OF THOSE MAGIC SUNSETS IS TO RENT A ***PARAW***

DAWN

I've heard many urban legends about late night parties on Boracay where anything is said to be possible. Well, it's actually true. While the clock is ticking its way to sunrise, Boracay nightlife gets more and more crazy, reaching its peak during full moon parties at **Area 51**, located at the end of Bulabog Beach. In this mysterious and hard-to-find place (the reason probably it was named Area 51.), incredible things happen and everybody, locals and tourists, gather together to enjoy the best and most memorable parties of Boracay. The priceless reward for staying awake until dawn in Area 51 is the chance to see the most beautiful and breath-taking **sunrises of Bulabog Beach**, surrounded by a good crowd, good drinks and great music.

INCREDIBLE THINGS HAPPEN AT **AREA 51**

Other photos courtesy of Café del Sol, Juice Bar, Epic, Area 51 and Owen Reyes

STA. LUCIA MALL

Mr. & Ms. SEXY BODY `13

Who Are We Looking For?

- Male and female, 18 to 28 years old
- Must be a high school graduate
- With a sexy body and clear skin
- With height of at least 5'3'' for female , 5'8'' for male

How To Join?

- Interested participant must secure an entry form from the ad & promo department now until December 21.
- Fill out the form and submit together with the following requirements:
  - Copy of birth certificate
  - 2 valid IDs with birth date and photo
  - 2 recent photos

Schedule:

- Venue : The Brickroad
- Elimination Rounds : December 7, 14 & 21
  January 4, 11 & 18
- Semi finals : January 19, 7pm
- Grand finals : February 9, 8pm

Media Partner

PLAYBOY PHILIPPINES

Per DTI-Rizal Permit no. 311 s. 2012

CITYSTATE

Asturias

HOTEL PALAWAN

YOUR PREMIERE HOTEL IN PUERTO PRINCESA PALAWAN

South National Highway, Tiniguiban, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines 5300

ROOM RATES

ROOM TYPE		LOCAL	DISCOUNTED	ROOM TYPE	LOCAL	DISCOUNTED
STANDARD	Php	~~5,000.00~~	2,500.00	Executive DELUXE	~~7,800.00~~	3,900.00
SUPERIOR		~~5,500.00~~	2,750.00	Junior SUITE	~~9,800.00~~	4,900.00
DELUXE		~~6,800.00~~	3,400.00	Executive SUITE	~~15,800.00~~	7,500.00

MANILA OFFICE:

CITYSTATE TOWER HOTEL

#1315 A. Mabini Cor. Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila, Philippines
Tel. Nos. (632) 708.9624 & (632) 708.9600